

PHELPS AND HIS TEACHERS

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Phelps and His Teachers by Dan V. Stephens

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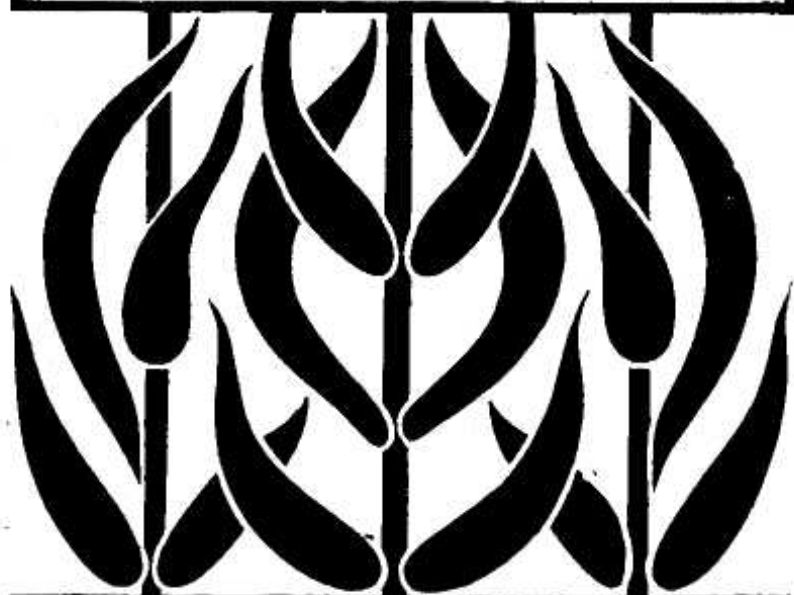
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INTRODUCING PHELPS AND HIS TEACHERS



IN THE following sketches the aim of the author has been to bring teacher and patron to a better understanding of the child, and incidentally of each other. Most of our troubles arise from misunderstandings, followed by hasty acts and words. It is so easy to misunderstand a child because he has such a limited power of expression. He often stumbles in his effort to understand and master things—often expresses thoughts he does not have, and does things he does not mean to do. In a measure this is also true of his grown up friends.

So it follows that complaints are frequent—the child against the teacher and the teacher against the child; the patron against both, and *vice versa*. Few of us are willing to concede to another an individuality that differs from our own.

This arrogance of spirit leads us to tyrannize over our weaker friends with a desire to make them conform to our notions of what they *should* be. Thus we fall into the habit of nagging, pruning, and otherwise affecting the character of the child and each other when we are often in nowise competent

to do so. It is not an uncommon thing for a genius to spring from a parent, who, ignorant and tyrannical, labors with fanatic zeal to crush out what seems to him to be a worthless characteristic. The world is filled with minds that could become great and helpful to humanity were their lots cast in a more congenial atmosphere where fanatics who imagine they, only, are in the right, could not trample them under foot.

The school and home should help the child's development along lines natural to his growth. This individuality should be considered. Let us get away from the idea that we own his life and can do with it as we please, and not be held responsible for our acts. Let us be sure that in our effort to make him grow straight and strong we do not make him grow crooked and weak. And above all, let us be charitable toward him and each other.

THE AUTHOR.

Fremont, Nebr., June 1, 1902.





PHELPS IN THE FIRST GRADE

I



LONG before Phelps started to school—and he didn't start until he was seven years old—his mamma told him about his prospective teacher. Phelps was curious about her. Would she be like his mamma or Jimmie's mamma, who lived across the street? His mamma assured him his teacher would be a kind, sweet woman who would love him. And Phelps believed it. Even Phelps' mamma believed it, for how could any one fail to love *her* boy.

In time Phelps was seven years old and was duly kissed and sent to school. It was a red-letter day at his home. All day his mamma waited and thought about her boy at school and wondered how he was getting along. He was the center of the classes as he appeared in her mind's eye; the pride of the teacher and the school. She could not foresee that there might be other boys and girls there who were