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# THE ALUMNÆ NEWS,

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## EDITORIALS.

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The "News" has seldom had better news to announce than the appointment of Miss J. B. Merrill as Supervisor of Public Kindergartens. It is not Miss Merrill, however, who is most to be congratulated; it is the children in whose welfare we are all so interested. It seems to us that none of the recent appointments meant so much to the city, except, perhaps, that of City Superintendent.

Two of our Alumnæ were candidates for this position, both of them women who had been in the public service, and had earned names for themselves. Mrs. Clara M. Williams has been for a score of years an earnest worker on Alumnæ Committees, and was at one time a Commissioner in the Board of Education. There were many deeply interested in her candidacy, and all knew she would work earnestly and conscientiously for the establishment of more Kindergartens in the city. But her lack of experience as a practical Kindergarten was felt by many to be a deep and serious drawback. The system demanded as its exponent someone who was thoroughly conversant, not only with the educational needs in the direction of the Kindergarten, but who would also be able to address those who had already earned distinction as practical Kindergartners and trainers of Kindergarten teachers. This experience, unfortunately, Mrs. Williams lacked, and even her most sincere friends felt it would vitally injure her cause and depreciate her efforts should she be successful in her candidacy.

Dr. Merrill, however, brings to the work a life devoted to the cause. We must consider this recognition of her fitness for the position as but a just reward for past labors. Since her graduation from Madame Krause's Kindergarten Training Class in 1877 she has never tired in her efforts to establish the Kinder-

garten system on a firm basis in this and other cities, and to extend its principles into the primary classes.

Nor has she narrowed her field of work to the Kindergarten proper. For twenty years she has been a successful teacher of Pedagogy at the College, at the same time constantly seeking to broaden her own views by extensive psychological and sociological research and study. Her work in Child Study is becoming very widely known.

Miss Merrill's reputation as a writer and speaker on these and allied subjects is national. It is impossible for us to go into details in this matter. One of her papers, "A Plea for the Pure Kindergarten," written for the World's Columbian Exposition, was published with others in a book on "The Kindergarten," by Harper & Bros.

I take it that the most valuable tribute Miss Merrill could have received in her candidacy was the stanch support of those who had formerly been her pupils. Her enthusiasm on the subject of Pedagogy in general, and of the needs of the Kindergarten in particular, has stirred more than one of her pupils to the most earnest work for children in all lines; and if the appointing Board were impressed with no other fact as to Miss Merrill's unusual fitness for the position, they must have been impressed by the evidences of the loving remembrance in which her teaching is held by her former pupils, as shown by the many letters received by the Committee from these pupils, many of them themselves teachers of recognized ability. This stanch support of former pupils would have been, even in the face of possible defeat, a most gratifying tribute to any teacher.

We offer Miss Merrill our heartfelt congratulations, feeling, however, as we said before, that it is the children, and not their champion, who are most to be congratulated.

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