SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

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SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

BY

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PREFACE

THE following chapters have been written with the needs and problems of the young teacher primarily in view. An effort has been made to present in a concrete way the various steps that may be taken to establish a wholesome school "spirit" that will reduce disciplinary difficulties to a minimum. To this end, most of the chapters deal rather with positive and non-coercive than with restrictive and repressive methods of treatment.

By way of introduction, the essential characteristics of a well-disciplined school are described, and the problem of creating these conditions is stated. The unruly or disorderly school is then assumed; the various causes which lead to disorder are analyzed; and the steps that may be taken to transform the situation are discussed in detail with as many typical concrete illustrations as the limitations of space permit. Coercive measures are treated briefly, following the discussion of the positive measures. An attempt has been made to outline the evolution of the idea of punishment as a coercive agency; and the different types of penalties commonly employed in the school are described and evaluated. Difficult and troublesome "cases" of discipline are then discussed, an attempt being made to classify

these into "types" and to report in some detail the methods that have been employed by successful teachers in dealing with each type. A final chapter discusses the relation of discipline to the doctrine of interest.

The illustrative cases have been drawn from a number of different sources; some have been taken from earlier books on school management; others from school journals; and a great many from the experience of teachers and principals with whom the writer has discussed the disciplinary problem. In every instance, so far as the writer has been able to determine, the cases report actual conditions with trustworthy fidelity.

In connection with the classification of "troublesome types" (Chapter XII), it should be understood that both the naming of the types and their grouping are only tentative. A rich field is here suggested that would amply repay intensive investigation.

A series of questions and exercises is appended to each chapter. The aim of these questions is primarily to provide a "study outline" for those who use the book as a text, either in class work or in individual study. Two types of questions find a place in these lists: first, "fact" questions that refer to the discussions of the text; and, secondly, "problem" questions which aim to encourage in the reader an application as well as an understanding of the principles. Questions of the latter type are the more numerously represented.

The writer is indebted to Professor L. D. Coffman for a number of the concrete cases and for many suggestions regarding the construction of the book. Per-

mission has very kindly been granted by the American Book Company to reprint from White's *School Management* three illustrative cases; and the committee of teachers in the Washington Irving High School in charge of publication have permitted the use of three extracts from the unique *Writs of Assistance*, recently issued.

Four of the chapters here presented appeared in a somewhat different form as articles in *School and Home Education* during the years 1912–13 and 1913–14.

URBANA, ILLINOIS,
November, 1914.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS MEANT BY A WELL-DISCIPLINED SCHOOL

PAGE

The paradox of discipline. — Changes in ideals of discipline. — The well-disciplined school dominated by a "fashion" of good order. — Meaning of "fashion." — Illustration of a well-disciplined school. — The meaning of discipline. — Protection of the group. — Educative influence of good discipline. — Summary: the three functions of school discipline. — Questions and exercises . . 1

CHAPTER II

THE UNRULY SCHOOL: ITS GENERAL CAUSES

Characteristic symptoms of the unruly spirit. — The causes of the unruly school: (*a*) Harsh and unsympathetic treatment. — Conditions favoring such treatment. — (*b*) Indulgence and weakness of control. — Difficulties of reconciling opposing ideals of individualism and collectivism. — (*c*) Inadequate preparation and brief tenure of teachers. — Disciplinary efficiency a product of experience. — Disciplinary weakness a frequent cause of failure among teachers. — Alleged advantages of youth and inexperience among teachers. — Questions and exercises 14

CHAPTER III

THE UNRULY SCHOOL: ITS SPECIFIC CAUSES

Problem of the chapter. — The teacher's personality. — Important elements in a teaching personality: Clapp's studies. — The qualities of personality negatively important in discipline: (*a*) Lack of sympathy. — (*b*) Vacillation or weakness of the will. — (*c*) Procrastination. — (*d*) Ungoverned temper. — (*e*) Tactlessness. —

PAGE

(*f*) Failure to get the pupil's point of view. — Minor causes of the unruly school: (*a*) Failure to mechanize routine. — (*b*) The faulty voice. — (*c*) Failure to limit responsibility for disciplinary duties. — Questions and exercises 29

CHAPTER IV

TRANSFORMING THE UNRULY SCHOOL: (*A*) THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OBJECTIVE ATTITUDE

Problem of the chapter. — What is meant by the objective attitude. — Obstacles in the way of the objective attitude: (*a*) Attitude of the public toward teaching. — (*b*) Influence of short-sighted educational theories. — Suggestions for cultivating the objective attitude: (*a*) Locking disciplinary worries in the schoolroom. — (*b*) Avoiding the poison of injured feelings. — (*c*) Absorption in objective problems. — Questions and exercises 51

CHAPTER V

TRANSFORMING THE UNRULY SCHOOL: (*B*) RAISING THE QUALITATIVE STANDARDS OF SCHOOL WORK

Problem of the chapter. — A rational attitude of the pupils toward school discipline, the goal. — Making the work the master. — Difficulties in the way of insuring this end. — Raising qualitative standards as one means of making the work the master: (*a*) The use of objective scales and standards. — (*b*) Encouraging pupils to compete with their own best records. — (*c*) Encouraging group rivalry. — Summary. — Questions and exercises 62

CHAPTER VI

TRANSFORMING THE UNRULY SCHOOL: (*C*) THE EMPLOYMENT OF INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS

Problem of the chapter. — The importance of individual problems. — The pupil should feel a responsibility to the class as well as to the teacher in working individual problems. — Individual assignments should have a value clearly understood by the pupils. — Types of individual assignments: (*a*) In geography. — (*b*) In

PAGE

reading. — (*c*) In arithmetic. — (*d*) The framing of questions by pupils. — (*e*) The project in manual training as a type of individual assignment. — (*f*) School "dramatics" and festivals as sources of individual assignments. — Concrete illustrations of the disciplinary effect of individual assignments. — The need of caution in generalizing from concrete cases. — Questions and exercises . 75

CHAPTER VII

TRANSFORMING THE UNRULY SCHOOL: (*D*) STIMULATING GROUP RESPONSIBILITY

Problem of the chapter. — The importance of developing group responsibility. — The limitations of group responsibility: (*a*) The older conception of the teacher as a master to be modified but not entirely abandoned. — (*b*) The danger of purchasing order with favors. — The "honor system" as a case in point. — The attitude of the pupils all-important. — Specific measures that may be taken to intensify group responsibility: (*a*) Demanding collective reparation for collective offenses. — (*b*) Rallying pupils to support the good name of the school. — (*c*) Encouraging mutual criticism: advantages and dangers. — Espionage and talebearing as related to group responsibility. — Suggestions for avoiding the encouragement of talebearing. — Pupil self-government schemes may serve temporary purposes. — Segregating group responsibility by conferring authority on the older pupils: the English system. — The development of a "fashion" of good order does away with the necessity for formal systems of self-government. — The rôle of literary and athletic organizations in stimulating group responsibility. — Suggestions for supervising pupil and student organizations. — Questions and exercises 90

CHAPTER VIII

TRANSFORMING THE UNRULY SCHOOL: (*E*) THE TONIC INFLUENCE OF A REGIMEN OF WORK

The importance of developing "habits of work." — The specific habit of adopting the work attitude during school hours. — The disciplinary effect of a regimen of work. — Establishing the regimen: (*a*) The need of alert control. — (*b*) Nervous tension must

PAGE

be avoided. — (*c*) The dirigibility of enthusiasm. — (*d*) Enemies of enthusiasm: (1) Unsympathetic supervision. — (2) Short-sighted criticism of school studies. — (3) The necessity for teaching many subjects some of which the teacher may dislike. — (4) Individual worries and cares. — (5) Administrative difficulties blocking the development of a regimen of work. — Questions and exercises . 119

CHAPTER IX

TRANSFORMING THE UNRULY SCHOOL: (*F*) THE PLACE AND LIMITATIONS OF COERCIVE MEASURES

Problem of the chapter. — The scope of direct coercion: often an initial but always only a supplementary method of transforming the unruly school. — The first principle: coercive measures must be swift, certain, and unerring. — Few rules, rigidly enforced. — Forbidden activities must meet with unfailing correction. — The decisive "coup" as a means of insuring initial order. — Illustration of the decisive coup. — The principle of persistence. — Who redirect coercive measures are "indicated": (*a*) The indulged or spoiled school. — (*b*) The school in rebellion. — (*c*) Willful disobedience. — (*d*) Malicious mischief: (1) "Horse-play" at fire-drills. — (2) Maltreatment and hazing. — (3) Petty theft. — (4) Vandalism. — (5) Insolence and insult. — Interference from without as a handicap to effective discipline. — The importance of publicity in cases of interference and dictation. — The principle of individual treatment. — The supervision of study and assembly rooms as illustrating the principle of individual treatment. — Questions and exercises 131

CHAPTER X

COERCION THROUGH REWARDS AND PENALTIES

The psychology of rewards and penalties: (*a*) The principle of direct association of reward or penalty with approved or condemned conduct. — (*b*) The relative efficiency of pleasant and unpleasant consequences in modifying behavior. — (*c*) The discipline of the disagreeable in education. — Factors conditioning the efficiency of penalties. — Questions and exercises . . . 164

CHAPTER XI

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND THE REACTION AGAINST IT

PAGE

The decline of physical coercion in American education. — Why actual physical coercion is disappearing: (*a*) The magnitude of the school system suggests power and authority. — (*b*) The development of special schools and reformatories for incorrigibles. — (*c*) The feminization of the teaching population. — (*d*) The development of humanitarian ideals, the most important factor. — The specific reaction against corporal punishment: (*a*) Universality of corporal punishment in former times. — (*b*) The decline of corporal punishment as a penalty under civil and military law. — (*c*) The universality of corporal punishment in the older schools. — The older severity sanctioned by the older ideals. — (*d*) The evolution of the conception of punishment: (1) The instinctive basis; vindictive or retributive punishment. — (2) The ideal of justice and the idea of proportionate punishment. — (3) The humanitarian ideal and the idea of reformatory punishment. — (4) The final stage: the idea of prevention of misconduct as displacing the need for punishment. — (*e*) The development of new prejudices from the operation of these ideals. — Difficulties involved in reconciling the newer ideals of punishment with existing necessities: (*a*) Leniency and disrespect for law. — (*b*) Leniency in school discipline as a possible factor in the increase in crime. — The place of corporal punishment in present-day education: (*a*) The older order should not be reestablished. — (*b*) The right to inflict corporal punishment should be reserved to the school authorities with adequate safeguards against its abuse. — (*c*) Where corporal punishment is "indicated." — (*d*) Suggestions for inflicting corporal punishment under these conditions. — Questions and exercises . . . 170

CHAPTER XII

CONTEMPORARY SCHOOL PENALTIES

Conditions which must be fulfilled by a school penalty that is to be thoroughly consistent with present-day ideals. — Contemporary penalties: (*a*) "Solitary treatment." — (*b*) Satiation as a penalty.

PAGE

— (*c*) Rebukes and scoldings. — (*d*) Keeping after hours. — (*e*) "Keeping in" at recess. — (*f*) Demerit systems. — Why demerit systems are usually ineffective. — (*g*) The withdrawal of privileges. — (*h*) Conferences with parents. — (*i*) Suspension. — (*j*) Reporting cases of discipline to the principal. — The dangers of weak sentimentalism in doctrines of discipline. — The place and limits of leniency in discipline. — Summary. — Questions and exercises 198

CHAPTER XIII

THE TROUBLESOME TYPES

Problem of the chapter. — Restatement of the functions of discipline. — Distinction in law between a crime and a vice. — Analogous distinction in the case of school offenses. — The troublesome types: Advantages of classifying troublesome cases under types. — Tentative classification: (*a*) The stubborn pupil. — (*b*) The haughty pupil. — (*c*) The self-complacent pupil. — (*d*) The irresponsible pupil. — (*e*) The morose pupil. — (*f*) The hypersensitive pupil. — (*g*) The deceitful pupil. — (*h*) The vicious pupil. — Questions and exercises 216

CHAPTER XIV

DISCIPLINE AND THE DOCTRINE OF INTEREST

Dangers of basing a theory of discipline solely upon the doctrine of interest. — At the same time, the close connection between interest and efficiency must be recognized. — The naive doctrine of interest lends a specious sanction to the lines of least resistance. — The conditions under which an effective interest is engendered: the illusory character of immediate interest shown in (*a*) The phenomena of the "warming up" period. — (*b*) The phenomena of the "practice" curve. — (*c*) The importance of familiarity and repetition in artistic appreciation. — Wider applications of the principles of familiarity and repetition. — Dangers of immediate interests in determining vocational choices. — Significance of vocational guidance. — Mental growth comes through overcoming obstacles. — The "travail" of mental growth. — The relation of discipline to mental growth. — Questions and exercises 238

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CHAPTER I

What is Meant by a Well-Disciplined School?

It is a paradox of the well-disciplined school that "discipline" is conspicuous by its absence. If an intelligent observer, honestly reporting a visit to a school, makes no reference to its discipline, one may be fairly confident that the school is "well-disciplined."

Ideals of what constitutes good discipline are subject to change. They have, indeed, changed very radically within the last two or three decades. The intelligent observer of fifty years ago, applying to our present-day schools the ideal of discipline then current, would criticize them as badly disciplined; and the observer of to-day, looking in on an old-time school, would have his attention attracted by various phenomena of discipline that our grandfathers would have overlooked as quite normal. The silence, the rigidity of posture, and the precision of movement would impress him (if he were a thoroughly orthodox modern schoolman) most unfavorably.

But the marked change that has come about in the ideal of school discipline is something deeper and more

fundamental than these contrasts suggest. The older ideal of discipline looked sharply to externals; the new ideals look below the surface. The older standards rested comfortably upon the more superficial symptoms of obedience, order, and industry; the modern standards probe into the motives of obedience, order, and industry. The older standards had regard primarily for the *physical attitude* of the pupil toward the school and toward the teacher; the modern standards have regard primarily for the *mental attitude* of the pupil toward his work and toward those who work with him.

The Well-Disciplined School is Dominated by a "Fashion of Good Order."—The essential characteristic of the present-day well-disciplined school has been identified with many different qualities. Some assert that the most important feature of such a school is the *interest* of the pupils in their work, or their absorption in *problems* that appeal to them. Others would lay large emphasis upon the *spirit of coöperation* among the pupils and between teacher and pupils. Still others would speak of *sympathy* as the dominant characteristic. There is justification for the use of any one of these terms in describing the well-disciplined school. Such a school is likely to be marked by the interest of pupils in their work; by their aggressive attack upon problems; by a spirit of coöperation; and by sympathy. Perhaps if any two qualities are essentially characteristic of the well-disciplined school, the existence of a spirit of coöperation on the part of the pupils and a

quick and intelligent sympathy on the part of the teacher should be accorded first choice.

The relative merits of these and other terms, however, need not trouble us unduly at the present point of the discussion. What is needed here is an expression that will enable us most clearly to formulate the immediate or near-lying problem of school discipline, and for this purpose there are many advantages in using the much-abused term "fashion." For the present, then, we shall think of the well-disciplined school as one in which the "fashion" or "mode" of good order, courteous behavior, and aggressive industry has been firmly established.

The Meaning of Fashion. — The word "fashion" is employed in everyday speech to refer almost exclusively to matters of dress; and yet, even in this narrow reference, it names a force that has a powerful influence over human conduct. Inevitably, the individual will act in most matters in accordance with group standards and group sanctions. He will follow the prevailing "mode," not only in his dress, but in his interests, his diversions, and his opinions. Fashion is not the greatest or the noblest force in life, but it is a force that dominates most individuals in some of their activities, and some people in most of their activities.

There is a customary use of the term "fashion" that is likely to be confusing in this connection.[1] When a "style"

[1] The term is, indeed, employed by sociologists in different ways. Ross (*Social Psychology*, New York, 1908, ch. vi) emphasizes fashion as

of dress, or a type of sport or recreation, or a mode of belief, is new and followed by a few, although rejected by the many, it is said to be a "new fashion"; the normal individual will be likely not to "follow the fashion" and perhaps he will plume himself not a little on the "independence" that he has thus asserted. As a matter of fact, the new style is distinctly not the "fashion"; it is rather a "fad"; it does not become the fashion until it has been generally accepted; and those who are really "independent," — who really refuse to follow fashions, — are the innovators. Whether such independence is a virtue or a vice or neither, — whether it is praiseworthy or blameworthy or indifferent, — depends upon the exigencies of the particular instance. The point of emphasis in the present connection is that the school virtues of obedience, order, and industry may be made matters of fashion among the pupils; that is, the pupils take these things "for granted," just as the normal adult takes for granted hats and coats and vests and shoes, or breakfast, dinner, and supper. They are not questioned, but are matters of course, — seldom obtruding themselves upon the consciousness of those who make up the social group as in any sense raising an issue, or demanding a choice from two or more possibilities of conduct.

A fashion, then, means for us in the following chapters a type of conduct that has been sanctioned and accepted and "taken for granted" by a large proportion of the social group, — by so large a proportion that those failing to act conformably with the dominant mode

springing "from the desire to individualize one's self from one's fellows." Herbert Spencer, on the other hand, emphasized fashion "as a form of social regulation analogous to constitutional government as a form of political regulation." It is in this latter meaning that we are employing the term.

of conduct feel out of harmony with the group as a whole, — feel, indeed, the powerful pressure of the group (exerted, perhaps, quite unconsciously) to bring them into harmony with the majority. The primary problem of school discipline is to insure the operation of this powerful force toward the end for which the school exists.

An Illustration of Fashion in School Discipline. — The " best disciplined " school that the writer has ever seen was in charge of a principal who had worked for six years to make the collective will of the pupil-body give its sanctions to good order, courteous behavior, and aggressive effort. Interest in school work and coöperation with the teachers had become distinct fashions. So powerful was the force thus generated and directed that the superintendent not infrequently transferred to this school pupils who had got beyond control in other schools of the city. Recalcitrant elsewhere, these pupils often settled at once into the dominant fashion of order and industry. The spirit of the social group seized them irresistibly. The social rewards which, in other schools, sanctioned disobedience, willful disorder, and idleness, went in this school to more laudable types of conduct; and the normal boy, craving the good will and the admiration of his fellows, sought these prizes through the only means that could procure them. To this school, also, teachers who had failed elsewhere were sometimes sent in order that they might regain their self-confidence and find themselves anew under the favorable conditions

there existing. Not all of the recalcitrant pupils, of course, succumbed to the powerful group influence; and not all of the teachers were able to undo the mischief of their earlier failures; but the mortality in both cases was surprisingly low.

The Meaning of Discipline. — In the preceding paragraphs the word "discipline" has been used in the sense in which it is commonly employed in the discussion of classroom management. It is essential at the outset, however, to have a fairly clear idea of the field that the discussion will cover; hence it will be well to formulate a tentative definition which will attempt to make explicit the problems that the teacher gathers together under the general term, "discipline."

Etymologically "discipline" comes from the same Latin root that gives us the word "disciple," and historically the problem of discipline has been to bring the impulses and conduct of the individual into harmony with the ideas and standards of a master, a leader, or a teacher. Military discipline has meant a type of training that would make a group of individuals instantly responsive to the will of the commander. Instantaneous obedience to commands, and precision of movement in response to certain signals, have been the ends which military discipline has sought. And school discipline meant for a long time a quite similar subservience of the individual will to the will of the teacher.

Changing ideals of education, however, and the development of a philosophy of life which recognizes the funda-

mental nature of individual rights, have combined to transform rather radically the meaning of discipline as a phase of the educative process. Under the stimulus of the democratic ideal, the notion of the subservience of the masses to the will of a master or a monarch has become repugnant. This does not mean that the necessity for discipline has passed, or that the factor of repression and control can be eliminated. It simply means that the point of view has shifted. The directive force of the master's or the monarch's will has been replaced in the theory of democracy by the directive force representing the collective will of the people. That this ideal of democratic theory is not thoroughly realized in the actual working out of democratic government is obvious; but few would deny that a large step in advance has been taken by recognizing in the established forms and constitutions of government the principle of the collective will, — even though it be quite true that strong individuals still dominate in large part the development of democratic societies, and often originate the opinions and judgments that later became crystallized in law and custom.

It is clear, however, that the social group which constitutes the school cannot in every way duplicate the conditions existing in adult society. The school must continue to resemble, in many ways, the older order in which a single individual imposed his will upon the group, and the conception of school discipline must continue to reflect some measure of arbitrary dominance and repression. This is made inevitable by the imma-

turity of the pupils, and by the necessity of bringing them, through a process of training, to the point where they can appreciate the nature and limitations of individual freedom. But the newer conception of school discipline, while it recognizes the difference between an immature social group and an adult social group, has been modified in many important ways by the democratic ideal. It has recognized the value of having the school life represent from the very outset, and increasingly with the increased maturity of the pupil body, the conditions of self-government and of the exercise of individual freedom checked by responsibility to the group as a whole. While the conduct of the child must be brought into harmony with the ideals of the teacher (which in turn represent the ideals of that larger society for participation in which the child is being prepared), the modern conception of discipline would bring the child as rapidly as possible to the point where he will recognize the necessity of repression, and see clearly that the demands made upon him, and the limitations placed upon his conduct, are really dictated by something more fundamental than the arbitrary will of those in authority.

The newer conception of discipline, in other words, recognizes that the measures which the school must take to control its pupils should serve as far as may be to illustrate the basic necessity for law and order in a civilized society; and it recognizes that these measures should be administered wherever possible in such a way that the individual will feel them as dictated, not by the

whims of those in authority, but by the necessities of the work that is undertaken and by the welfare and needs of the social group.

There remains, however, a certain meaning of the word discipline which is somewhat independent of social implications. Not only must the group be protected from the impulses of the individual; and not only must the necessity for this protection appeal with compelling force to all; but the individual must from one point of view be protected against himself. The service which a routine or regimen of disciplinary measures may render in developing the important art of *self-control* cannot be overlooked. It is true that society has set a high sanction upon self-control very largely because the self-mastery of each individual is the clearest guarantee that he will not run amuck of social restraints and conventions. But, viewed from the point of view of individual welfare alone, it is obvious that self-mastery is equally important. It is through the discipline of childhood and youth that the individual may most readily be taught to suppress momentary desire for the sake of a remote end or goal. It is through systematic discipline in this sense of the word that he may be led to appreciate the highest values that life holds. Generally speaking, it is the primitive, untrained, undisciplined mind that follows the behest of transitory impulse through the seductive lanes of least resistance. In any case, the only known means of counteracting this primitive tendency is to acquaint the child, from an early age,

with the meaning of persistence, sustained effort, and an occasional sacrifice of the desires of the moment; and this can be done only through a salutary regimen of sympathetic but rigorous discipline.

Summary: The Functions of Discipline. — The meaning of school discipline, then, may be formulated as three related and yet somewhat distinct functions:

1. The creation and preservation of the conditions that are essential to the orderly progress of the work for which the school exists.

2. The preparation of the pupils for effective participation in an organized adult society which, while granting many liberties, balances each with a corresponding responsibility, and which, while allowing to each individual much freedom in gratifying his desires and realizing his ambitions, also demands that the individual inhibit those desires and repress those ambitions that are inconsistent with social welfare.

3. The gradual impression of the fundamental lessons of self-control, especially through acquainting the pupil with the importance of remote as contrasted with immediate ends, and through innumerable experiences which will lead him to see that persistence and sustained effort bring rewards that are infinitely more satisfying than can be attained by following the dictates of momentary desire.

The Problem of the Unruly School. — It is in the schools where disorder, discourteous behavior, and lack of aggressive effort are the fashion that the problem of

discipline becomes of the greatest significance; for in these schools otherwise normal pupils are assimilating the most unfortunate standards and gaining the very worst type of preparation for later life. And such schools, while undoubtedly less numerous in proportion to the total number of schools than they were twenty years ago, are still all too frequently found in our country to-day. In well-organized systems where supervision is constant and usually efficient, these schools may be quickly discovered and their faults corrected. But in the smaller communities and in the country districts where the teaching population in general is immature, transient, and inadequately trained, and where supervision is necessarily infrequent, these breeding places of twisted standards and evil habits may easily exist year after year with little attempt at correction. Indeed, it is not infrequent to find these unruly schools "taken for granted." Teachers and parents have become so thoroughly accustomed to the unfortunate attitude of the pupils that it is accepted as a matter of course.

The preceding discussion has aimed primarily to indicate what is meant by the term "fashion" and to suggest its important bearing upon the chief problem with which the following pages will be concerned. It will now be our task to follow out some of the implications of this point of view. The specific problem is this: Given a school in which the unfortunate fashion of disorder, discourteous behavior, scamped work, and lack

of aggressive effort has become established, how may this unfavorable attitude be transformed into one of the opposite type? How, in short, can an effective fashion of good order, courteous behavior, and aggressive industry be established?

Questions and Exercises

1. What features of a school that is well-disciplined as measured by modern standards would be inconsistent with the older ideals of school discipline? What features of the older type of school discipline are inconsistent with the modern ideals?

2. Give examples of standards of conduct that are "taken for granted" by the adult social group in your community.

3. How would you determine in inspecting a classroom whether good order, industry, and a respect for the rights of others had been made matters of "fashion"?

4. Contrast effective school discipline with the effective discipline of a military company. What points of similarity and what points of difference would you emphasize?

5. In connection with the three general functions or purposes of school discipline, name three common practices that aim primarily to fulfill the first function. Three that are concerned chiefly with the second and third.

6. Can you think of measures that might effectively meet the demands of the first function, but which would be inconsistent with the second or third?

7. Would you treat failure to do assigned work as an offense against the school (that is, as inconsistent with the welfare of the group), or simply as an offense of the individual against himself? If both points of view are justified, which is the more significant in a case of this kind?

8. Would you justify disciplinary (or corrective) measures in the following case and, if so, upon what basis? A pupil who is required by the poverty of his family to deliver papers in the morning and who is, consequently, deprived of the normal amount of sleep, becomes cross and troublesome in school, neglecting his lessons and indulging in various types of mischief.

CHAPTER II

The Unruly School: Its General Causes

The Characteristic Symptoms of the Unruly Spirit. — We shall start, then, with a school in which the wrong "fashion" has become firmly established. A most unfortunate spirit, antagonistic to order and inimical to effort, dominates the pupils as a body. They are openly disrespectful to those in authority. Perhaps they sit sullenly in their classes, answering questions in monotones and monosyllables, only inertly attentive to the work in hand. They nudge each other when the teacher is not looking; indulge in smirks, giggles, and guffaws as the occasion seems to warrant; groan audibly when tasks are assigned; and, in general, indulge in that form of misbehavior which, for want of a better term, may be dubbed "smart-aleckism." At the close of the recitation, they either saunter disdainfully or rush pell-mell back to their seats, — or, in a departmental school, back to the study or assembly room. In the "lines," they are mischievous; on the playground they are defiantly rough, self-consciously boisterous, and intentionally rude. On the street they may hoot and jeer at strangers and "call names" at the teachers passing on their way to and from school.

Nor are the symptoms of a thoroughly unruly school limited to these collective manifestations of a defiant attitude. The individual pupil, taken to task by the individual teacher, will be sharp and insolent, or sullen and secretive. He will pretend not to hear questions and commands, loitering when requested to come quickly, dawdling over his tasks with an air of willfully inviting trouble. For scamped work, he will be ready with plausible excuses; against charges of carelessness or of misconduct he will assume the air of injured innocence.

It should be remembered that we are dealing here by definition and hypothesis with a school made up of boys and girls, otherwise quite " normal," who are governed by the wrong type of group standards; we are not dealing with mental or moral defectives. The pupils may come from good homes, and in these homes they may be fairly representative of normal, well-behaved, well-mannered children. But the moment that they enter the atmosphere of this unruly school, they are transformed literally into beings of another species; and the atmosphere of the school is not to be spatially limited; it extends to all situations in which the " school attitude " dominates the pupil.

The Causes of the Unruly School. — The first approach to the problem at issue, — the problem of reforming this unfortunate spirit, — lies naturally in a search for the causes that commonly lie back of the situation to be remedied. By hypothesis, the attitude of the pupils is general; of course, there are conspicuous

exceptions, for in the worst situations one will find individual pupils who are docile and tractable; but these often serve only to intensify the difficulties of the problem, for they are seldom leaders and the rewards that go to them for their good behavior simply stimulate their less docile fellows to renewed efforts at trouble-making. They set negative fashions, so to speak, because they are negative forces in the collective life of their juvenile community. Generally speaking, then, little help can be expected from these individual exceptions.

General Causes: (*a*) *Harsh and Unsympathetic Treatment.* — Of the possible causes of the unruly school, two may be cited first as probably more frequently operative than all others combined. One is *careless, unsympathetic, sometimes even brutal treatment* at the hands of teachers and principals who have become hardened through failure, and who teach school, as it were, "from hand to mouth." That is, they preserve a sufficient measure of order to keep from actual dismissal, and yet are never able to generate enthusiasm over their work. Schools of this type are likely to exist in decadent city systems, where political influence governs appointments and ties the hands of administrative officers. These officers, indeed, not infrequently settle into the attitude of acquiescence in the lack of *morale* which characterizes the teaching force. Like the teachers themselves, they work from hand to mouth, reasonably content if each succeeding year finds them

still holding their thankless offices, the recipients of a meager but still unearned wage.

As antecedents to conditions of this sort, one may all too frequently uncover tragedies of blighted hopes and decayed ambitions that would stimulate the pen of a Dickens or a Hugo. Men and women who have entered upon the work of teaching or of administration with an enthusiastic recognition of its possibilities and responsibilities have found themselves, when it is too late to change, fettered to a system that is cankered with political corruption, or held upon the lowest plane of efficiency by the inertia of a decadent community. Lacking the ability or the prestige to assume aggressive social leadership for the improvement of conditions they have been held to the wheel of routine until all of the spirit has been crushed from them.

Occasionally into such a system comes a superintendent with the power of leadership and with ideals of progress. But the decadence is often too far advanced to permit of regeneration. The entire school organization is infected with the virus; the older employees, secure in their appointments through long years devoted assiduously to keeping their "fences" in repair, habituated through their experience to the policy of doing the least work for a living wage, respond to the stimulus of reform with a deadening lack of interest or with reactionary conspiracies and cabals. The new superintendent may strive to remedy the situation, but finding the task beyond his strength, he too may sink to the

level of toleration and passive acquiescence which will soon lapse into somnolent indifference.

It is not the purpose of the present discussion to dwell upon the grave social dangers which inhere in situations of this sort. Obviously what is needed in such cases is a profound awakening of the community to its responsibilities. The evil here is community indifference, and can be effectively met only by community stimulation. But two or three alert and progressive teachers serving in such a community can do much to show the need for such a reform by making their own classrooms so radically different from the average in the community that the contrast will compel a recognition of the evils. This, we take it, rather than aggressive outside propaganda, is the field in which the classroom teacher can render the greatest service. And in the arid deserts represented by these decadent systems, one not infrequently finds oases of efficiency that could well stand as models of classroom service in any community. This is only another way of saying that the classroom teacher, even though subjected to the handicap of serving in a decadent system, can yet fulfill his or her own responsibilities in an effective way, and create a school spirit that will not be without a salutary influence upon the community as a whole.

The difficulties are numerous and onerous, but they are not insuperable. Perhaps the most serious is the powerful social pressure that comes from the teaching group as a whole, — a type of pressure common in some

labor organizations in which work that is above the average in efficiency is looked upon as inconsistent with the standards of the craft, — as an expression of disloyalty to one's fellow workers. Loyalty is a most important virtue, and must be listed among the prime requisites of a system of craft or professional ethics. But no craft or profession can permanently endure if its standards are inimical to public welfare; and such is surely the case when " loyalty " to one's fellow craftsmen precludes the highest possible development and application of individual skill.

Inadequate supervision is often a prime cause of this unprogressive, hand-to-mouth attitude of the teaching staff, quite apart from the coöperation of stultifying political or social factors. Teachers who must do their work without the stimulus of tangible and direct responsibility for disciplinary conditions may easily acquire habits of harshness, severity, and unsympathetic control that will easily give rise to a negative attitude of the pupil body toward the school and its work. And along with too little supervision in this connection must certainly be listed too much supervision of the wrong sort, — the nagging and querulous faultfinding that incites the teacher to gain the desired results by a reapplication to his pupils of the same nagging and faultfinding methods. Thus a school system that would seem from the outside to be admirably organized and most carefully supervised may reveal innumerable centers of disaffection.

(*b*) *Indulgence and Weakness of Control.* — A second general cause of the unruly school is quite the opposite of that just discussed. It may be summed up in the one word, "indulgence." Here there is no harshness, no severity. Sympathy may be abundant, but it is of the wrong variety; it finds erroneous expressions in permitting lapses from good order to go unnoticed, in tolerating discourteous conduct, and in accepting scamped and careless work. Like the spoiled child in the indulgent home, the pupil group becomes overconscious of its own demands and gradually passes to the point of looking upon privileges as rights. The pupils may even assume a disdainful attitude toward the authority of the school and of the teachers, acting under the sincere belief that, in the school as in an organization of adults, all forms of government are unjust that do not rest upon the consent of the governed.

Back of this condition there is likely to be a crude philosophy of discipline held by those in authority or by influential individuals in the community. Indeed, to harmonize the practical necessities of child discipline with the principles of individual liberty is not an easy task, and those who approach this task with an emotional bias are quite likely to overshoot the mark. The tendency to solve intricate and fundamental problems by the nonchalant application of half truths and emotional shibboleths is all too common among social reformers, especially among those whose efforts must, from lack of training and experience, be decidedly amateurish. The

interest of the people in school work ought to be encouraged in every way, but the government of large masses of children is a quite different problem from the government of two or three children in the home (certainly vastly different from the government of one child, and it is from experience so limited as this that some of the most astounding suggestions for school reform frequently emanate). The management of a classroom of thirty or forty children or the management of a large pupil group aggregating from five hundred to two thousand immature souls is a special problem demanding specialized ability. It is not a problem with which amateurs can safely experiment.

There are also certain tendencies of a widely prevalent type which intensify the difficulties here suggested. The general attitude of the public both in America and abroad toward disciplinary measures has been radically transformed within the last two or three decades. As was stated in the preceding chapter, ethical standards have changed. Individual development and individual self-realization are ideals that have a wide and growing currency. The reaction against coercive methods of government finds a concrete expression in the demand that coercive measures be minimized in school practice. The right of the child to be well fed, well housed, and well taught easily suggests his right to work out his individual desires and impulses, untrammeled, so far as possible, by adult repression and control.

The large element of worth that inheres in this doc-

trine of individual rights should not blind one to the iniquities that may result from attempting suddenly to transform the government of the school consistently with its tenets. Individualism and collectivism have still many hard and knotty problems to compromise before the proper balance is struck; and, if we are not mistaken, some of these problems are centered in the government of the people's schools. We shall have occasion to revert to this problem in a later discussion. In the present connection, it is enough to recognize that the attitude of disrespect for authority upon the part of the pupil has sometimes been effectually if not deliberately encouraged by the propaganda that has been undertaken to better the conditions of child life and to conserve child welfare.

A typical example of what well-meaning reformers may do quite unintentionally to pervert the attitude of children toward the authority of the law is to be found in the following quotation attributed to Judge Lindsey:[1]

"In dealing with the problem of crime in youth, we shall make progress just in proportion as we appreciate the absurdity of limiting our remedies to the court, the jailer, and the hangman. Our plea for public playgrounds is a plea for justice to the boy. We are literally crowding him off the earth. We have no right to deny him his heritage, but that is just what we are doing in nearly every large city in this country, and he is hitting back, and hitting hard, when he does not mean to, while we vaguely understand and stupidly punish him for crime. *Why shouldn't he rebel?* The amazing thing is that he is not worse than he is."

[1] Quoted in *Journal of Education* (Boston), Oct. 31, 1912.

We have strong faith in Judge Lindsey's sincerity, and a deep appreciation for the fine altruism expressed in the above paragraph. And yet the quotation implies a specious argument that has already worked mischief in school management, whatever may have been its influence in civil government. *Why shouldn't the boy rebel?* The situation oppresses him. So the industrial situation oppresses many people. Shall we encourage them for this reason to play fast and loose with the law of property? The marriage contract oppresses some people. Shall we indorse the doctrine of free love? Our system of import duties is far from equitable. Shall we palliate smuggling?

It is safe to say that the unfortunate disciplinary conditions in some schools may be traced to the prevalence of the fallacious reasoning that is likely to follow from the hasty acceptance of half truths regarding individual rights. The operation of this factor is not so frequently a cause of the unruly school as is the harsh, careless, and unsympathetic treatment referred to above. Its seriousness, however, is not adequately indicated by the relatively small number of schools in which it does operate, for these schools, though few in number, are among the most conspicuous, and are sometimes looked upon as models which represent the last word in educational progress.

(*c*) *The Inadequate Preparation and Brief Tenure of Teachers.* — The conditions described above are intensified by the lack of preparation that characterizes a large proportion of elementary school teachers, and by the brief tenure of service which makes the teach-

ing population a constantly changing body. There are in the public schools of the United States about 530,000 teachers. Of these it is safe to say that approximately one half (or more than 250,000) are twenty-four years of age or under; and approximately one fourth (or more than 125,000) are twenty-one years of age or under. Thousands of teachers are seventeen, eighteen, or nineteen years old.[1] Stated in terms of the number of pupils taught, one may say with fair confidence in the accuracy of the statement that between four and five million boys and girls in our public schools receive all of their formal education from teachers who are scarcely more than boys and girls themselves.

The seriousness of this situation may not be apparent at first glance. Sometimes one will find competent and efficient teachers in this immature group; but the chances are strongly against efficiency. A certain measure of maturity is essential to sound judgment in dealing with children. The adolescent teacher is too close to childhood himself or herself adequately to appreciate the responsibilities of the trust that a teaching position involves. And this immaturity of judgment is likely to find its most unfortunate expression in dealing with difficult cases of discipline. One is likely to go either to the extreme of severity or to the extreme of leniency. The immature teacher has yet to

[1] Computed from the tables in L. D. Coffman's *Social Composition of the Teaching Population*, New York, 1911.

learn a fundamental lesson that is very difficult to master, — the lesson of the "objective attitude," the art of reading the personal factor out of the disciplinary situation;[1] and the immature teacher is also particularly subject to the foreshortened perspective which fails to see beyond immediate consequences.

The large proportion of young teachers in the public-school service suggests at once the near-lying cause of the condition, — namely, the brief time during which the average teacher remains in service. Of the half million teachers in our schools, approximately one fourth are new each year. In any case, one cannot be far wrong in stating that more than one hundred thousand new recruits are needed each year to fill the broken ranks of the teaching corps. The "average life" of the elementary school teacher is certainly not more than four years, and this means that approximately one half of all of those entering the teaching service leave this service before they have reached their fifth year of experience. One fourth of those entering leave at or before the close of their second year.

Disciplinary Efficiency a Product of Experience. — How much the ability to secure a reasonable measure of order in a classroom depends upon experience it is difficult to say, but certain facts justify the statement that, during the first three or four years, the average teacher is doing amateurish and not expert work. Ruediger and Strayer,[2] for example, had 204 elementary

[1] Cf. ch. iv. [2] *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. i, pp. 272 ff.

school teachers "ranked" by their principals on the basis of "general merit" and found that no teacher with less than five years of experience found a place in either the first or the second rank; and they found further that the most important specific quality making up "general merit" in elementary teachers is disciplinary ability. Boyce,[1] in a similar study of the qualities of merit among high school teachers (involving the "ranking" of 434 teachers by their principals) found no teacher in the first or second rank who had not had at least three years of experience; disciplinary ability, although not so prominent a factor in general merit here as among elementary teachers, still plays an important rôle.

Disciplinary Weakness a Frequent Cause of Failure among Teachers. — The data represented by these two studies are supplemented in a very interesting way by three studies of the causes of failure among elementary and high school teachers.

Littler[2] obtained data regarding the causes of failure among 676 teachers who were dropped from the teaching staff in various types of elementary schools during the two years, 1908–1910. The cause most frequently noted by the principals and superintendents reporting was "weakness in discipline," and this cause accounted for more than fifteen per cent of all failures. Buellesfield,[3] following Littler's method, has shown that this source

[1] *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. iii, pp. 144 ff.

[2] *School and Home Education*, March, 1914.

[3] In an unpublished study on file in the library of the University of Illinois.

of failure is more frequently found among immature teachers of brief experience than among older teachers who have served longer. According to Buellesfield's study, weakness in discipline was easily the most frequent source of failure among elementary teachers, accounting for 15 % of all failures among women teachers and 22 % of all failures among men teachers. Miss Cleda Moses[1] studied the causes of failure among high school teachers, collecting data regarding 205 cases, and discovering that weakness in discipline, while a frequent cause of failure, is not proportionately so significant here as among elementary teachers, — a conclusion that harmonizes with the results of the " merit " studies noted above.

The Alleged Advantages of Youth and Inexperience in Teaching. — As has been suggested, youth and inexperience are not without their advantages as parts of the teacher's equipment. The young teacher, Professor O'Shea[2] says, "will make mistakes due to inexperience, but he will exhibit an enthusiasm and freshness and vigor and optimism which will go far to compensate for lack of experience." In so far as disciplinary troubles are concerned, however, the balance is decidedly against youth and inexperience, even granting the advantages to which Professor O'Shea refers. Enthusiasm, vigor, freshness, and optimism are not the prerogatives of adolescent boys and girls alone. With a reasonable

[1] *School and Home Education,* January, 1914.

[2] In *Wisconsin Journal of Education,* June, 1914, p. 154.

degree of maturity, enthusiasm can still be engendered, but there is no known way of putting old heads on young shoulders. Too many teachers lose their freshness and their optimism as they grow in years and experience, but this is not entirely the fault of the years or of the experience; it is often due to the unfortunate conditions under which their work must be done.

Questions and Exercises

1. Add to the list given in the text characteristic symptoms of an unruly school spirit. What are the most common expressions of this unruly spirit?

2. In your own school experience, has harshness or indulgence been the more disastrous factor in breaking down, or preventing the development of, a wholesome "fashion" of good order?

3. Among the "spoiled" children of your acquaintance, what factors operating in homes of the children seem to have been primarily responsible for "spoiling" them?

4. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of a teaching population one fourth of which is made up of very young and inexperienced members. What measures would you suggest for insuring a larger proportion of mature and experienced teachers in our schools?

5. Contrast from your own experience in school the work of the inexperienced and the experienced teachers. From which group do you now feel that you received the greater benefit? In general, which group did you "like" the better? Which group had the less trouble with problems of discipline and order?

CHAPTER III

The Unruly School: Its Specific Causes

In the last chapter, some of the general conditions which favor the development of an unruly spirit in a group of pupils were discussed. It is now essential to consider the more specific causes of this spirit and particularly the practices of the individual teacher which are likely to encourage the unfortunate attitude.

The Teacher's Personality. — The word "personality" is one that is commonly used in discussions of good and poor teaching. In some discussions of educational problems, indeed, all virtues and vices are referred to this factor: everything is due to the "personality" of the teacher. Certainly in accounting for successes and failures in discipline, the word looms large. It is well, therefore, to inquire somewhat minutely into the meaning of this important term, and especially to determine typical expressions of "personality" that are unfavorable to discipline and order.

It goes without saying that personality as commonly used in reference to a teacher's characteristics is a very complex thing — so complex that it will perhaps defy any attempt toward a helpful analysis. The critics of educational theory lay heavy emphasis upon the intangible character of this and other factors with which the student

of education must deal, maintaining that these factors are so complex and so elusive that an attempt to unravel the tangles only results in artificial simplifications that do more harm than good. Some, indeed, would maintain that the factors which go to make one successful or unsuccessful in teaching are not to be modified by experience and training, — that one can never "learn" to teach, but must have the teaching instinct as an innate trait. These critics, however, overlook the important fact that teaching ability *does* improve with experience; in some way or another, the characteristics that make for success and efficiency are acquired or "learned." The problem of those who train teachers is very largely one of finding out what characteristics or capacities need improvement and then to arrange some typical experiences that will work toward the desired betterment. But in order to proceed in this rational way, the factors and qualities that have been assumed to be intangible and unanalyzable must be split up into simpler elements. It is useless to talk about improving one's "teaching personality" unless the ingredients of personality are known. One must at least attempt an analysis.

The Important Elements in the Teacher's Personality. — What, then, are the elements of a good teaching personality and of a bad teaching personality? One serious attempt has been made to answer this question. F. L. Clapp[1] secured from one hundred experienced school

[1] In an unpublished study on file in the library of the University of Illinois.

superintendents and principals — men who had had wide experience in selecting and training teachers — lists of the ten *specific qualities* that, in their opinion, went to make up a good teaching personality. As one would expect, the replies included a wide variety of these specific qualities. In fact, almost every imaginable trait or characteristic found a place in the aggregate list. Most of these qualities, however, were mentioned by only one or two individuals; comparatively few were found in all of the separate lists. But there were ten qualities which found a place in a large number of lists, and these ten in the order of their frequency, were the following:

1. Sympathy.
2. Personal appearance.
3. Address.
4. Sincerity.
5. Optimism.
6. Enthusiasm.
7. Scholarship.
8. Vitality.
9. Fairness.
10. Reserve or dignity.

These ten qualities, then, represent the composite judgment of one hundred experienced schoolmen as to the composition of the "teaching personality." This method of analysis, however, gives suggestive but scarcely trustworthy results. A superintendent of schools always applies his notion of "personality" in "sizing up" the qualifications of applicants for teaching positions, but the notion that he applies is the result rather of a "general impression" than of careful analysis. When, therefore, he is asked what he means by personality, he is

likely to answer in terms of what, in his opinion, *ought* to be included rather than in terms of what *he actually has in mind* when he applies the notion in choosing teachers.

In order to overcome this tendency, Mr. Clapp resorted to an ingenious device. He asked one hundred forty superintendents and principals to list their six best teachers, first in the order of "general teaching personality" (ranking as Number One the teacher with the best personality, as Number Two the next best, and so on), and then to list these same teachers in the order of their "sympathy," their "personal appearance," and so on through the ten subordinate qualities that his first investigation had revealed. In this way, he was able to secure what might be termed "unconscious analyses" revealing pretty accurately just how these ten qualities operated in the *actual judgment* of superintendents regarding the personalities of their teachers.

When he had completed the task of equating these various rankings, Mr. Clapp found that the specific qualities which go to make up the teaching personality, as this term is used in judging teachers, stood actually, not in the order represented by his first table, but in a somewhat different arrangement, as follows:

1. Address.
2. Personal appearance.
3. Optimism.
4. Reserve.
5. Enthusiasm.
6. Fairness.
7. Sincerity.
8. Sympathy.
9. Vitality.
10. Scholarship.

The important result of this study is the evidence that it offers against the fatalistic notion that the important factors in the teacher's personality are not improvable through the discipline of experience and training. There are undoubtedly some individuals who could never improve their manner of meeting people (their "address"), and there are others, perhaps, who could never make their "personal appearance" more attractive. Still others, it is clear, are natural pessimists, and neither experience nor training nor inspiration could transform their gloom and depression into "optimism" and "enthusiasm." Still others are naturally undignified and can have no commanding influence over their fellows. They lack "reserve" and can never create it. Some, too, are naturally unfair, or weak in vitality, or deficient in sympathy. But, after all acknowledgment has been made to the fatalists, it must still be admitted that most individuals *can* change and improve these various qualities. Knowing what factors "count" in a teaching personality, the beginning teacher, under wise supervision, may adopt measures that will work what might seem at the outset to be little less than a miracle of transformation.[1]

The Qualities of Personality Important in Discipline.— It is impossible to say, in the absence of an extended investigation, which of the above qualities are most important from the standpoint of disciplinary ability. It is reasonable to infer, however, that "reserve," "en-

[1] Mr. Clapp found very clear evidence that both experience and training had a positive effect in improving the "teaching personality."

thusiasm," "fairness," "sincerity," "sympathy," and "vitality" are especially significant from this point of view. The teacher who is noisy, boisterous, and undignified is more than likely to incite these qualities in his or her pupils. The teacher who lacks enthusiasm will probably fail in all phases of his work, but his discipline is particularly likely to suffer. Unfairness is a notorious stimulus to intentional disorder, and insincerity is fatal to teaching efficiency at every point. Vitality as evidenced by alertness and "energy" is likewise a positive factor in discipline; of the ten factors in the list, it is perhaps the one that is least amenable to improvement through systematic training, — although where lack of vitality is due to discouragement, malnutrition, insufficient sleep, overwork, or overworry, the remedial measures are certainly at hand.

Lack of sympathy for childhood is undoubtedly one of the prime causes of disciplinary difficulties. It commonly reveals itself in a lack of *rapport* or mutual understanding. There is, between the teacher and the taught, a gulf or chasm that is quite obvious to the experienced onlooker. Both teacher and pupil are self-conscious, one setting himself over against the other as a natural enemy. The condition is frequently well known to the teacher, and the consciousness of his failure intensifies the seriousness of the situation, making it all but impossible for him to work naturally and spontaneously. Troubles consequently "grow upon themselves"; one difficulty gives rise to another; and each adds its in-

crement of estrangement to the unfortunate attitude already existing. This is not "lack of sympathy" if we mean by that phrase an inherent carelessness upon the part of the teacher regarding his pupils and their progress. It may, indeed, be very far from this. The teacher may desire intensely to do his work well; he may crave the affection and confidence of his pupils; and the fact that affection and confidence do not crown his efforts depresses and worries him.

Where this situation can be remedied (and it is the writer's belief that appropriate measures will relieve nine cases out of every ten), the treatment first indicated is to transform both the attitude of the pupils and the attitude of the teacher. The subjective, personal feelings of distrust must be broken up and forgotten through absorption in objective matters. The various means that may be employed toward this end will be considered in a later chapter.[1]

What a pupil understands to be a sympathetic teacher is important in this connection. W. F. Book[2] collected data from 582 high school pupils touching this question. The following qualities are given in the order of their importance as indicated by the number of times they were mentioned in the replies; the figures in parentheses represent the number of "votes" for each group of related qualities:

1. Kind, forgiving, and generous; or, stated negatively, never rude, harsh, sarcastic, or given to ridicule. (144.)

[1] See ch. iv.

[2] "The High School Teacher from the Pupil's Point of View," *Pedagogical Seminary*, September, 1905, pp. 239 ff.

2. Pleasant, cheerful, good-natured, happy, jolly, even-tempered; or, never cross or unpleasant, never scolded, criticized harshly, or continually found fault. (112.)

3. Patient, considerate, thoughtful of the feelings of his pupils, reasonable; not "cranky," over-particular, or unreasonably strict. (104.)

4. Firm, decisive, business-like, and strict. (59.)

5. Inspiring, easy to approach. (46.)

6. Serious, earnest, unassuming, rather dignified, quiet. (26.)

Vacillation or *weakness of the will* is another trait of personality that is a frequent cause of disciplinary troubles. This may be incurable, an innate weakness of character; but it is often the unfortunate result of early failure or of uncertainty upon the part of the teacher with regard to his responsibility and his authority. The general conditions described in the preceding chapter are especially likely to encourage vacillation and gradually to weaken the moral stamina of the teacher. When a community refuses to support the schools in cases of discipline and especially when the adults "side" with the pupils against the school authorities, a severe handicap is placed upon the efforts of the teachers, and those who remain firm and persistent are likely to suffer. At the same time, an unfortunate premium is placed upon those who, through flattery or cajolery, curry favor and cultivate "popularity" among pupils and parents, thus adding to the burdens of the self-respecting teacher, who can never demean himself by practices of this type. Or it may be that the schools are in charge

of a weak superintendent who is so anxious to safeguard his position that he also takes sides with the pupils against the classroom teacher and thus makes it very difficult for the latter to enforce reasonable requirements. In all of these cases, vacillation will be encouraged, and the results are fairly certain to spell disaster.

When the vacillation is the result of external conditions, a mere change in these conditions will commonly work a transformation. A little whole-hearted support from a superintendent or principal; one or two successful experiences in which vigor and firmness have gained the desired end; the renewal of one's self-confidence and good spirits by a taste of triumph, — any one of these factors may bridge the chasm of failure that seems at times to yawn directly at one's feet. The "do-or-die" attitude is often not only valuable, but absolutely essential in cases of this sort.

And these factors, also, will not be without their beneficial influence upon the teacher who is naturally weak and vacillating. There are some men and women, of course, who have an abnormally intense instinctive tendency to yield to a more vigorous personality. What McDougall[1] calls the instinct of "subjection" is strongly marked in their original nature. Quite naturally and instinctively they fawn and quail when threatened. And a strong, vigorous, domineering personality is quite likely to be found in a group of

[1] W. McDougall, *Social Psychology*, London, 1910, pp. 62 ff.

children at almost every level of development. Here, for example, is a boy small in stature and young in years, who has ruled his little world from infancy. He has gained confidence in his ability to bring to the point of capitulation not only his fellows, but his elders. He has learned the large strategic value of vigorous self-assertion. A teacher who is naturally weak will just as naturally feel the power of this self-assertive and self-confident personality, even though it be a child's personality, and the tendency to yield will be the more irresistible the weaker the teacher. And yet strenuous measures, even under these conditions, may bring about a new era in the teacher's life. The weakness represents a tendency, a "diathesis," which, like an inborn tendency to tuberculosis or insanity, *must be met by a process of self-discipline more vigorous and more prolonged than the normal individual would need to employ.* But if hereditary weaknesses of other types can be counteracted by appropriate measures, there is no reason to believe that an inherited "weakness of the will" may not be similarly overcome. And here it is especially comforting to note that success "grows upon itself."

Procrastination may be looked upon as a specific expression of weakness of the will. The young teacher is likely to feel uncertain in his judgments of what constitutes a lapse from discipline. He is particularly likely to overlook the first expressions of a mischievous or unruly spirit, hoping that if these are passed by, his pupils will later settle down to aggressive work. He

lacks firmness in his initial admonitions and directions, and consequently misses the best of opportunities for getting his administration of the school or the classroom started aright.

With experience the teacher acquires an effective skill in " sensing " disturbances and knows almost intuitively whether this or that expression upon the part of his pupils is inimical to good discipline. A great many little things are overlooked or neglected, although not unnoticed, by the expert teacher. The beginner is almost certain to misplace the emphasis; but, in general, it is safer at the outset to err on the side of rigor than on the side of leniency.

It is the teacher with an inherited tendency to indecision and weak will who is most likely to be shipwrecked through this tendency to let initial disorder pass unnoticed. The following case is typical.

A young woman of twenty-one was a member of the senior class in a normal school. She had completed the classwork in the academic and professional subjects with a commendable record, and was sent to the training school for her semester of practice teaching. The superintendent recognized her at once as having a "weak" teaching personality. He placed her in charge of a fifth-grade section and carefully watched her work. She made absolutely no impression upon her pupils and the classroom quickly became unmanageable unless a supervisor were present. The student-teacher was warned of her defects and of the disastrous consequences that impended, but all to no avail. At the end of three or four weeks it was necessary to deprive her of her teaching privi-

leges. She was placed "on observation" for the remainder of the semester, spending most of her time in watching the work of two or three very expert teachers, and discussing this work with the superintendent.

At the beginning of the next semester, she was placed in charge of another practice section. By dint of strenuous supervision, she completed the term of teaching, and at the close was given her diploma, although with so many misgivings on the part of the superintendent that he refused to recommend her for a position (a type of temporizing that is not at all uncommon in teachers' training schools). She secured a position upon her own initiative, however. (The "stamp" of the normal school enabled her to do this, school boards naturally concluding that a diploma from a normal school meant an indorsement of teaching ability.) At the close of a month her new superintendent told her that it was hopeless for her to continue. She spent the remainder of the year at home, and secured another position for the following year. This position she retained for one semester, being advised to resign at the end of that period. She waited another half year and then secured a third appointment. She wrote to the normal school toward the close of the year "I am going to finish the year here, but I shall not have a reappointment. . . . I know where the trouble is. It is in the way I begin the very first week or two, and I have resolved that next year, if I am fortunate enough to get another position, I will have good discipline the first of the year if I do not do any teaching for ten weeks."

The simple lesson of the "right start" had been taught to this teacher before she went into the practice school. It was enforced there, and illustrated by her initial failures. It was written large across the successive

disasters of the following years. The lessons that cost so much as this are undoubtedly effective in the end, but the price is paid in material that is far too precious to be needlessly wasted.

Ungoverned temper of the "explosive" type represents a defect in teaching quite opposite to vacillation and procrastination. Here, again, a teacher may be the victim of hereditary tendencies that will make this defect very difficult to remedy; but the fatalistic notion that quick temper is not amenable to control is just as fallacious as the notion that an inherent tendency to vacillation cannot be overcome. From the point of view of discipline, the ungoverned temper represents the acme of danger; and the more so, perhaps, because a violent display of temper may result in an apparent victory for the teacher. That is, the pupils may be cowed into submission in a trice and the teacher may be encouraged to repeat the operation until it has become a most disastrous habit. We are confident that these occasional triumphs are in no sense a justification for abrogating one of the first principles of discipline, — namely, the maintenance of a thoroughly objective and judicial attitude upon the part of the teacher.

Professor William Lyon Phelps in his very sensible discussion of discipline [1] states the case picturesquely:

"The teacher should never lose his temper in the presence of a class. If a man, he may take refuge in profane soliloquies; if a woman, she may follow the example of one sweet-

[1] *Teaching in School and College*, New York, 1912, p. 23.

faced and apparently tranquil girl — go out into the yard and gnaw a post; but there must be no display of rage before the clear eyes of children. When I taught school, there were many times when the indifference, stupidity, flippancy, or silliness of the class brought me to such a pitch of rage, that I dared not trust myself to speak. I would clutch the arms of my chair, and swallow foam until I felt complete self-command; then I would speak with quiet gravity. The boys all saw what was the matter with me, and learned something not in the book."

Tactlessness should undoubtedly be listed as a defect of personality, although it does not appear in the group of specific qualities collated by Mr. Clapp. In Mr. Littler's investigation, however, it appears as a recognized cause of an appreciable proportion of the failures among elementary school teachers (between three and four per cent of all the failures reported were ascribed to this defect), and it is undoubtedly a contributing cause in many cases where failure is reported as due to weak discipline.

Here once more we are face to face with a complex factor that must depend in some measure upon native tendencies. There are some men and women who are almost instinctively diplomatic; they seem to "sense" immediately the elements in a situation that are likely to arouse needless antagonism, and to adjust themselves to the situation in such a way as to avoid these difficulties. Upon the whole, however, while differences in native endowment will, here as elsewhere, constitute an element of uncertainty in our calculations, it is fairly clear that

this ability to " sense " the critical elements in dealing with men and women and children grows with experience, and it is conceivable that one might analyze the processes that are involved and determine just what steps are essential to effect a marked improvement. By " taking thought " one may certainly learn to avoid the grosser errors.

What are some of the pitfalls of tactlessness that beset the path of the young teacher in dealing with disciplinary situations? Undoubtedly most of the difficulties of this type may be traced to " hurt feelings," — needlessly " hurt feelings " we should add, because it is conceivable that feelings sometimes must be hurt if necessary reforms are to be brought about. The teacher will have in every class a certain proportion of hypersensitive children, and to deal with these children effectively will be to avoid a goodly number of disciplinary difficulties. This type of child will be discussed in a later section,[1] and suggestions will there be made as to the type of treatment that experience has shown to be effective.

But there are general, often habitual, practices that are essentially tactless. The storming, blustering attitude is tactless, and especially the threatening attitude, for this simply invites trouble that otherwise never would occur. A cardinal rule of school management is to have few rules, and these very specific and relentlessly enforced. In general, a rule or a restriction should not be enunciated until the need for it has been shown,

[1] See ch. xii.

although there are exceptions to this precaution — as, for example, when the first snow of the season will tempt every normal boy to throw snowballs without due regard to the fragile nature of schoolhouse windows or the temper of passers-by.

A prime condition of tactless blunders is the failure upon the part of the teacher *to get the pupil's point of view regarding apparently trivial and unimportant things.* Children are inherently jealous; for the teacher to display favoritism in an ostentatious way is to court disciplinary disaster, — as well as to commit an injustice toward the pupils who receive this undue attention. To expect the teacher to have the same measure of regard and affection for all of his pupils is to expect the impossible, but so far as the *expression* of this regard is concerned, it is not difficult to distribute one's favors equitably.

Tactlessness often expresses itself in failure to take advantage of dominant tendencies among the pupils in connection with the fulfillment of certain requirements. There arises, of course, an important ethical question in this connection: Should the teacher go out of his way to make a duty pleasurable? — a question that we must face when we consider in detail the relation of discipline to the doctrine of interest. But it is safe to say here that many disciplinary difficulties can be legitimately avoided by a tactful appeal to interests and desires. Tom Sawyer, in getting his fellows to whitewash the fence, illustrates the type of tactful

treatment that is especially effective with children and with adolescents. To make a duty appear in the light of a privilege may be questioned on ethical grounds, but one cannot deny its practical efficacy.

A five-year-old boy disliked to go to kindergarten at the outset. He rebelled strenuously on a certain morning, and a troublesome experience seemed to be in prospect. A neighbor appeared on the scene. Her daughter, Mary, aged four, was to start kindergarten that morning; the mother could not take her; a street-car track was to be crossed, and she did not wish her to go unattended; would Dick — But Dick was near by and had heard the conversation. "I'll take care of Mary," he said at once, swelling with pride at the thought of the responsibility that would be delegated to him; "I shan't let anything hurt her. I'll take care of her." The rebellious spirit disappeared in an instant. Taking Mary to kindergarten was the privilege that made Dick enthusiastic about his own attendance until the initial distaste was overcome, and the school, so to speak, attracted him in its own right.

Tactlessness in dealing with parents and with other members of the community almost always results in weakening the teacher's authority over his pupils, and consequently serves to aggravate disciplinary troubles. Another recognized rule of school management is never to lose one's temper in dealing with parents, no matter how great the provocation. One can afford to spend much time and energy in explaining to parents the nature and the educational justification of the requirements made by the school, — sometimes to the extent

of neglecting one's class work for a half-hour period, but one cannot afford to meet an irate parent with angry words or to return insult or innuendo in kind. Silence and forbearance are shining virtues in desperate situations of this type.

Minor Causes of the Unruly School. — In addition to the factors of "personality" discussed in the preceding sections, there are certain specific conditions that have a vital relation to school discipline. Some of these are undoubtedly closely concerned with the personality of the teacher, but there are good reasons for considering them separately inasmuch as they will commonly yield to rather simple precautions.

Mechanized routine is among the most important of the conditions to be listed here. Disorder and confusion will inevitably grow upon themselves, and in the absence of simple rules for the performance of routine tasks, duties, and movements, disorder and confusion are inevitable. The writer has emphasized in another place [1] the importance of initiating immediately upon the organization of a school or a class the little specific habits that will take care of routine matters. If each pupil knows at the outset just what he is to do as a matter of routine and how he is to do it, many difficulties, otherwise serious, will be easily avoided. This is particularly true in large schools and in large classes; but no matter how small the school or the class, the teacher will do well to bear in mind the advice so admirably expressed

[1] *Classroom Management*, New York, 1907, ch. iii.

by Professor Phelps: "Nothing is too minute or too trivial that concerns the great art of teaching." [1]

Reference is here made to such matters as line formation (or, where lines are not formed, the orderly passing of the pupils to and from their classrooms); the disposal of hats and wraps; passing to and from the blackboard; the orderly arrangement of books and materials in desks or cabinets; posture in sitting at desks; the movements that are essential in changing classes; fire drills; and similar matters. Detailed suggestions for organizing these routine phases of school activity are given in the writer's *Classroom Management*, the emphasis being placed upon (1) a careful preliminary survey of the conditions before the school is organized to determine what phases of routine should be established at the outset, and (2) the value of getting the necessary habits started on the first day, giving perhaps two or three formal exercises in the different movements.

The teacher's voice is a factor of large importance in discipline, and, in spite of the apparent difficulty in modifying the "natural" tendencies in speaking, it is a factor that is controllable in a measure seldom recognized by those engaged in the training of teachers. The principal evils to be avoided or counteracted are: (1) the shrill, high-pitched, rasping voice; (2) the unnecessarily loud or "noisy" voice; (3) the inarticulate voice which fails to enunciate distinctly; (4) the thin, feeble voice which lacks vigor and force; and (5) the monotonous voice which lulls pupils to somnolence through lack of emphasis. By "taking thought" each one of these

[1] *Teaching in School and College*, p. 15.

defects may ordinarily be remedied, at least in part, — and any slightest improvement is a clear gain. The "noisy" voice is perhaps the one most inimical to order, for, by suggestion, it gives rise to noise and confusion throughout the classroom. The feeble voice, the inarticulate voice, and the monotonous voice are usually amenable to treatment through appropriate exercises.

A *clear recognition of special responsibility* is especially important in a large school where disciplinary functions must be divided among the various teachers, — each, perhaps, taking his or her turn in supervising playgrounds, toilet rooms, lunch rooms, and the like; one being delegated (in the high school or the departmental grammar school) to look after the debating clubs, another the orchestra, another the athletic organizations. There is indeed abundant justification in the large school for appointing special teachers to devote part of their time to such duties as are performed in the large universities by the deans of undergraduate men and women. Needless to say, the responsibilities imposed by these various types of supervisory service should be balanced by a lighter teaching program than falls to the lot of the average teacher. There is no condition more deplorable than that which is found in many schools where the few teachers who are thoroughly competent to take responsibility for the nonscholastic functions are overloaded with these duties without a corresponding decrease in their teaching programs.

Questions and Exercises

1. Compare two teachers that you have had in your school experience, one with a "strong" personality, the other with a relatively "weak" personality. Write down as many traits or characteristics differentiating the two as occur to you in making the contrast.

2. Compare especially the methods of discipline employed by these two teachers. Which one was the more severe? the more relentless in applying standards? the more likable? the more enthusiastic? the more sympathetic?

3. What evidence can you give to show that a good "teaching personality" may be acquired by one who, in beginning teaching work, is handicapped by a relatively "weak" personality?

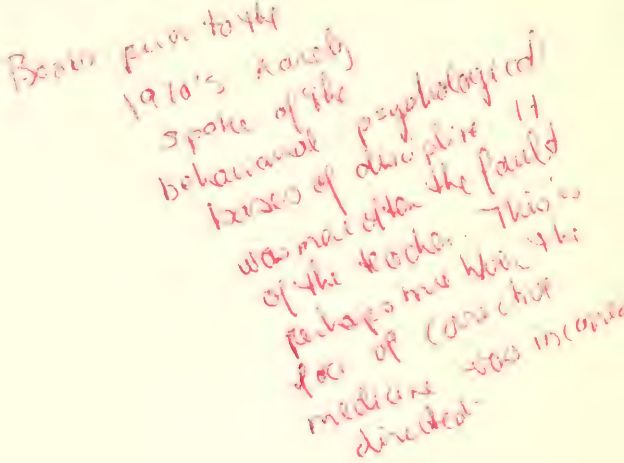
4. In recalling the schoolfellows of your early school days, can you find instances of boys or girls who were not very forceful among their fellows — who were perhaps "nonentities" or ciphers in the social group — surprising you later by their achievements and attainments? Can you find analogous instances on the other side, — natural "leaders" who later became "nonentities"?

5. Compare two individuals of your acquaintance, one of whom you would call "strong willed" and the other "weak willed." In what characteristics do the sharpest contrasts lie? If you were the weaker, what steps would you take to remedy your defects?

6. Give from your own experience in school instances of tactless management upon the part of teachers. Give analogous instances of tactful management. "Try your hand" at a definition of "tact."

7. What phases of school routine are likely to be sources of disciplinary trouble unless steps are taken thoroughly to mechanize the necessary movements?

8. Ask an experienced school supervisor whether you have a good teaching voice. If you find that it is defective, experiment with methods of correction. For example, if enunciation is faulty, practice reading aloud very slowly; if the voice is "thin" or weak, try the effect of regular breathing exercises; if the voice is "noisy," make an effort to speak in a low tone and note the result.



CHAPTER IV

Transforming the Unruly School: (*A*) The Importance of the "Objective" Attitude

The two preceding chapters have dealt with the conditions that are likely to give rise to an unruly spirit among pupils and students, and have attempted to indicate how some of these conditions may be avoided, counteracted, or overcome; how, in other words, the development of an unruly spirit may be *prevented*. Prevention is always easier than cure; but there are occasions when preventive measures come too late, and when efforts of another type are needed. As stated in Chapter II, we are assuming the existence of a most unfortunate "spirit" among the pupils. We are assuming that a bad fashion of disorder, scamped work, and disrespect for authority has become fixed upon a school, and we shall presently ask how this unfavorable attitude of the pupils may be transformed, and how a "fashion" of the opposite type established. An attempt will then be made to classify some of the practices that have been successful in solving this difficult problem, but first of all an important word needs to be said regarding the attitude of the teacher who is face to face with a situation of this type.

What is Meant by the Objective Attitude. — The words " objective," " impersonal," " detached," may be employed to characterize this attitude. The chief danger in dealing with a disciplinary situation is that the teacher's attitude will be subjective and personal. This, at all costs, it must not be. The appropriate attitude is quite analogous to that of the physician who is treating a serious illness at a critical stage; it should *not* be analogous to that of the warrior who is waging a life-and-death contest with an opposing foe. It may be that something akin to military strategy is justified; it may even be that force must be applied; but, in either case, the element of personal feeling or animosity must be rigorously excluded. To the teacher, the disciplinary situation must be as thoroughly impersonal as the limitations of human nature will permit; otherwise his assumption of authority will involve injustice. Even primitive social groups recognize that neither party to a personal dispute can safely be intrusted with the power to settle it, — or to dictate the penalty that shall be imposed upon the other. *When the disciplinary situation becomes " personal," therefore, the teacher has lost his right to dictate terms.*

The objective attitude and the emphasis of the impersonal relationship will not preclude sympathy, but it will preclude an ineffective emotionalism. The physician is far from unsympathetic with his patient, but he does not let his sympathy blind his judgment, nor does he interpret the stubbornness of the illness

as an affront to his dignity or a reflection upon his personal character. It is rather an opportunity for exercising his keenest professional judgment and applying his most consummate form of technical skill. The stubbornness is a challenge to his professional self and not to his personal self. To lose his self-confidence and his self-mastery would be professional suicide.

The teacher or the principal who is face to face with an antagonistic school, then, will have taken the first step toward a successful issue when he reads his own personal *ego* out of the problem. That this is often hard to do only intensifies the necessity of doing it. The very fact that a group of unruly children will instinctively do everything in their power to tantalize and irritate one who is in authority over them, and fail to separate the official from the individual, makes redoubled efforts at self-mastery and a maintenance of the objective attitude the more essential upon the part of the teacher. It is, indeed, extremely difficult not to respond personally and subjectively to a situation that is continually interpreted by others in a personal and subjective way.[1]

Obstacles in the Way of the Objective Attitude. — The estrangement between pupils and teacher is not

[1] A teacher writing eighty years ago emphasized the danger of the subjective attitude: "I took them [the pupils] all to be young knaves at the very opening of school, and made laws accordingly; and what I took them to be, many of them slowly became. They constantly watched their opportunity to evade my laws, and I watched my opportunity to detect them, and enforce the penalty." (Quoted in *Annals of Education*, Series III, vol. v, 1835, p. 27.)

infrequently intensified by the attitude of the public toward the work of teaching, which is sometimes so unsympathetic as to render the teacher uncomfortably self-conscious. One of the problems of education is to change public opinion in this regard, and to insure for the teacher an effective " professional status." Under present conditions, it is hard for the average man to view the teacher outside of the classroom as he views other normal men and women. The " academic " atmosphere seems to cling more closely to the teacher in his nonscholastic life than the legal atmosphere clings to the lawyer or the commercial atmosphere to the business man. The consciousness of this handicap tends to make the teacher ill at ease, and this mental condition renders difficult a thoroughly objective and professional attitude toward his work.

It is in connection with disciplinary difficulties particularly that the handicap of an unsympathetic public attitude is likely to be most strongly felt. The seriousness of a disciplinary situation is often unintelligible to the layman. Why " mere children " should be the cause of so much trouble puzzles him, and he is likely to believe the teacher to be inherently weak when, as a matter of fact, the situation that is being faced would test the tact and wisdom of the keenest intellect and the power of the strongest will. Thus the teacher, finding that the public takes his or her troubles very lightly and quite unsympathetically, is likely to brood over them in secret, — hiding them from others and even

attempting an ostrich-like essay at self-deception. One result of this is often found in the failure to correct offenders against order, and this is serious enough; but another is the mental worry and depression which the condition brings about in the teacher himself or herself.

It is those who suffer in silence that suffer most keenly, and if the Freudian conception of mental derangements has done nothing else, it has certainly shown the vital necessity for getting fears and worries "out of the system" through pouring one's troubles into a sympathetic ear. Not only do thousands of teachers voluntarily leave public school service each year because the strain is too severe to be borne, but the proportion who break down in service is alarmingly large. Not often does the real cause of most of these tragedies get into the public press, but an occasional item referring to an extreme case may be taken as typical of innumerable cases, perhaps equally serious, that do not result in publicity.

The following editorial from the *Journal of Education* (Boston) certainly gives one reason for asking whether the people are treating as they should the teachers of the people's schools:

"In one week recently three women teachers in New England committed suicide because, as announced, 'the unruly boys drove them to suicide.' We are less skeptical than we should be did we not know how strenuous is the life of a new teacher. . . .

"There is no denying the fact that there is the same bump-

tiousness among boys as there is among men and women. The unrest in politics, society, business, labor, suffragists, and church is present with boys and girls. . . .

"It is of no avail to say that we should treat them as we were treated. That sort of talk has wrecked many a well-established business. . . . It is a common event for men in business or in politics to commit suicide because they cannot deal with men as of old. Teachers are sure to pay the 'high price' of the times in which we live. The 'high cost of living' is not chiefly a financial affair."

Nor is educational theory without an unfulfilled responsibility in this matter. The tone of teachers' handbooks is generally peremptory and sarcastic in the discussion of disciplinary problems. One would assume from a cursory reading of these treatments that discipline is a very simple little matter that almost any one with common sense can handle without difficulty. As a result, the young teacher who has imbibed such questionable wisdom is morally certain to conclude that his or her own troubles and vexations are peculiar to him or her alone. Of course, nothing but self-distrust and extreme depression can follow from such a conclusion, and the subjective attitude is inevitable. As a matter of fact, the implication that discipline is a trivial matter is entirely without warrant. Very few teachers have succeeded in their work without undergoing many strenuous and sometimes heart-rending experiences in dealing with recalcitrant boys and girls. And the young teacher will do well to look upon these difficulties as part and parcel of the day's work, — problems to be

studied and solved in a judicial frame of mind, as part of the work for which one is being paid. To look upon them as burdens which one is singled out by an unkind fate to bear alone and in silence, is to court disaster at the very outset of one's career.

Suggestions for cultivating the Objective Attitude. — When these troubles threaten to assume a personal reference, the moment has arrived for what may be called "prophylactic" treatment, and the secret of success here is strenuously to occupy the mind with other activities, especially when one is tired out with a strenuous day of teaching. Above all, hasty and ill-considered action is to be avoided. Perhaps something may be lost by delay, but the chances are that a hair-trigger explosion will make matters infinitely worse. When a difficulty has been "slept over" the atmosphere is likely to clear up and one is enabled to see happenings in their proper perspective. There are certainly occasions, — as will be suggested later, — which will brook no delay even if one's temper is worn to a fine edge, but these occasions are infrequent. In general, then, an excellent method of cultivating the objective attitude is to *lock the disciplinary worries in the schoolroom when the day's work is over.*

The importance of getting a personal grievance "out of the system" has already been referred to. It is well to imagine one's self in the place of the offending person, — especially if the offending person is a child. For the child to confuse the personality of

the teacher with the authority of the teacher is natural enough; for him to express his dislike of school requirements in forms of rebellion against those in authority is not unnatural. He is bound to make *his* references personal rather than impersonal, and to interpret his situations subjectively rather than objectively. But for the teacher to retaliate in kind, — for him to place himself upon the level of the immature and inexperienced child, — is stultifying to his adulthood. Offenses must be noticed; children must be corrected; the pupil must even be led to see that his conduct has been such as might stimulate others to anger and lead to personal retribution. But the teacher cannot afford to give the child many object lessons in loss of temper as a means of impressing this fact.

In one of the best books for teachers ever written, Emerson E. White's *School Management*, the problem of the objective attitude is treated briefly but effectively in the following words:

". . . It is both unwise and unjust for a teacher to feel that the misconduct of his pupils is aimed at him, — that they are actuated by conscious personal feelings toward him in all that they do or fail to do. Such a feeling is sure to estrange the teacher's heart, to lead to personal likes and dislikes toward pupils, and to end in discord. A reference to his own experience as a pupil ought to dispel such a delusion from a teacher's mind. The conduct of a pupil may be aimed at the teacher, may have a personal feeling back of it; but this is exceptional, — at least it should be so considered. . . . The true policy for the teacher is *to keep him-*

self out of his pupils' conduct, — to consider misconduct as an offense against the school, and not against himself.

"The writer once gave this advice to some young teachers in a county institute, . . . and in the evening he was surprised and the audience convulsed, by a very pat illustration given as an introduction to an elocutionary entertainment. The elocutionist said that, at the close of the afternoon session, he put on his overcoat and fur muffler (the first seen in that section) and, with the words, 'Keep yourself out of your pupils' conduct,' ringing in his ears, started for the hotel. As he was turning a corner, a little imp across the street yelled out, 'My! Ain't that feller got long ears!' Supposing that the remark was suggested by his fur muffler, and aimed at himself, he started across the street to punish the fellow for his impudence, but, on glancing up the street, he saw a man leading a mule with the longest ears he had ever seen. He came quickly to the conclusion that the boy meant the mule! 'It is usually wise,' he added, 'to take it for granted that the mischief of the school is aimed at the mule.'"[1]

Getting the poison of injured feelings out of the system may sometimes be effected through talking over one's troubles with an older and more experienced teacher. But one needs here to beware of the too kind friend who will sympathize so whole-heartedly as to encourage the nurture of the grievance. The principal or the superintendent is the logical father confessor in cases of this sort, and the young teacher who can feel perfectly free to consult with the principal or the superintendent — and most of these men and women would receive these

[1] E. E. White, *School Management*, New York, 1894, p. 33.

confidences in the right spirit — will usually gain a type of advice adapted to the particular situation. But the important point in the present connection is the advantage of *expressing* one's feelings in a way that will not bring disaster.

In general, absorption in objective problems will tend to work the desired end. These problems may be remote from the sources of one's present difficulties; or they may be concerned with objective methods of solving these difficulties, types of which will form the themes of the following chapters.

Questions and Exercises

1. What is meant by the "objective attitude" in school management? Contrast it by example with the "subjective attitude."

2. What conditions or occurrences are likely to make the teacher "self-conscious"? What steps would you take to guard yourself against danger under these conditions?

3. In cases of excessive "worry" or the "blues" try the experiment of throwing yourself into some activity foreign to that causing the disturbance. Note the results. Where does the greatest difficulty lie in making this experiment? Can you devise means for reducing the difficulty at this point?

4. One person of our acquaintance suggests the following method of getting personal grievances "out of his system." When irritated or exasperated by the conduct of another, he sits down and writes the offender a stinging letter. This he places in his desk and leaves it there until the next morning. Invariably on re-reading the letter in the morning, it sounds so

foolish that he throws it into the waste-basket. But the expression has relieved the tension.

5. A successful superintendent writes: "If we succeed in our schools in maintaining proper discipline, it is largely because we try to see things through the eyes of our pupils as well as through our own. Many troubles arise in school because of the stubbornness of teachers and because of their failure to see the matter from the pupil's point of view." Another person writes that the best way to attain the objective attitude is to imagine one's self on the outside looking on at one's work. This art of personal "detachment" is very difficult, but it is worth practicing.

CHAPTER V

Transforming the Unruly School: (*B*) Raising the Qualitative Standards of School Work

Assuming an effective professional, impersonal, and objective attitude upon the part of the teacher, the next problem is to change the point of view of the pupils in this unruly school. Hitherto, we may assume, the pupils have localized in the personality of the teacher the force that is compelling them to do certain tasks and restrain certain impulses. *They have not felt the compulsion of the tasks themselves, nor have they recognized the necessity of the restraints.*

A Rational Attitude of the Pupils toward School Discipline the Goal. — Ultimately, if the work of the school is to be prosecuted with a maximum of efficiency, the pupils must get beyond this primitive point of view. They must feel the compelling force of the work to which they set their hands, and they must see clearly that, in the interests of the social group, there are certain desires that cannot be gratified and that must be repressed. The fundamental reasons for these requirements and restrictions should gradually be brought to their attention; but too much cannot be expected in this direction at the outset. The problem is first

to habituate them to the orderly, systematic, regular routine of tasks and duties, insuring in them a distinct recognition that it is the *task* and not the teacher that "drives" them to persistent effort; and, at the same time, to cultivate the responsibility of the pupil group as a whole for the order and industry of individual members, thus acquainting the individual with the *social* pressure that, together with his daily work, will constitute the chief coercive force in his later life.

In other words, *the pupil must come to feel the necessity for sacrificing momentary whims and desires for the sake of his own individual progress; he must feel the necessity for sacrificing individual whims and desires for the sake of the social good; and, as far as possible, he should in his school life locate these compelling forces in the work that he is doing, or in the social group in which he has a place, for this is the normal state of affairs that will operate in his adult life. He should not locate the forces either in the school that he attends or in the personality of the teacher who instructs him, for then not only is the force likely to cease to operate once the influence of school and teacher has been removed, but the unfortunate attitude of personal antagonism toward those in authority is likely to persist indefinitely.*

Making the Work the Master. — It goes without saying that pupils who are absorbed in their tasks will cause a minimum of trouble in discipline. This is one of the "discoveries" that critics of school work are likely to voice emphatically — under the assumption,

presumably, that teachers and principals are ignorant of the simple truism. It is quite another matter, however, to insure this absorption upon the part of every pupil in every task that the school demands, — and here the critics are usually discreetly silent. Some, however, are keen enough to recognize that this, after all, is the crucial problem, and propose to cut the Gordian knot by dispensing with all subjects in which pupils cannot be readily interested. This apparently simple solution, however, quickly collides with the public demand that certain subjects be taught and that teachers acquire the art of teaching them to the pupils who need them, whether these pupils " take naturally " to such subjects or not. Sometimes it seems that the public would relax a little in these demands, but usually the apprehension (or the hope, as the case may be) is only short lived. And this almost instinctive reaction of the public mind may be fairly trusted to reveal real needs. The school must meet social demands, and this necessitates *common elements* in education. " All the children of all the people " must have a certain common capital of skill and information, and this common capital constitutes the curriculum of the elementary school. It is the teacher's task, not only to give to each pupil that which he desires and can assimilate without effort, but also that which is recognized as essential to him as a social unit.

The point of view from which many school critics condemn educational practices is well represented by William Hawley

Smith's *All the Children of All the People*.[1] The following quotation will reveal the kind of thinking that this type of criticism involves:

"Shall, then, our public schools have no courses of study? I am asked. And I hasten to reply: No fixed and uniform courses, the same for all the children of all the people; no course which is 'that or nothing' for every child — nothing like that. Surely not. We shall simply carry out, in all departments of these schools, the principle of 'electives,' now so thoroughly established in the leading colleges and universities of this country.

"Then, instead of sticking to the idea that the children are made for the schools, we shall stand on the just and rational basis that the schools are made for the children.

"Then, in determining what studies each several child shall pursue, in making up a course of study for each, we shall be guided by the natural aptitude and abilities of that child, by the way he is, and not by the demands of any institution, or of men — parties who have never seen the child in question, and so know nothing of what he really needs to make the most of himself."

It is clear that Mr. Smith has quite overlooked the fundamental significance to a democracy of certain basic facts, ideas, and ideals that are common to "all the people," — a fatal defect in many of the proposals made by schoolmen as well as laymen for the reorganization of the lower schools. To ask whether the pupils are for the schools or the schools for the pupils is to blind one's readers to the basic fact, — namely, that the schools are "for" society and that the social demands are fundamental.

[1] New York, 1912. (Especially ch. xxiii.)

We have small faith, however, that the problem of discipline would be materially simplified even if the heroic measure of making an individual program for each pupil were universally adopted. After all, what the critic of school practice commonly forgets is the influence of habituation. As we shall point out in a later chapter,[1] the fascination that one feels for one's work is very largely dependent upon familiarity with that work, and skill in its details. *Any type of work is likely to be distasteful at certain points in the initial stages of its mastery.* The problem of "making the work the master," then, would be likely to confront the teacher under any circumstances.

Raising Qualitative Standards of Work One Means of making the Work the Master. In the unruly school, the teacher is on the defensive, and his first problem is to transfer his pupils to this position. Here the clearly indicated policy is one of increasing the qualitative standards of school work; as one successful teacher replied when asked for advice on this matter, — " ' Stiffen ' the standards and ' check up ' the individual pupil more relentlessly." The strategic value of this policy from the point of view of discipline lies not only in the fact that it takes the pupils' attention away from mischief and concentrates it upon the school tasks, but also in the fact that it shifts the " defensive." The pupil is no longer the aggressor worrying his traditional enemy, but the defender finding all that he can do to keep his own position secure.

[1] Ch. xiv.

But the emphasis should certainly be laid upon the adjective, "qualitative." Merely increasing the *quantity* of work to be done will be of slight service in solving the problem. Indeed, too many teachers vent, through extra long assignments, the spleen that has been irritated by inattention and disorder. This practice is to be thoroughly discountenanced; first, because it is commonly ineffective, and, secondly, because it is interpreted by the pupils as a punishment, and thus breaks a cardinal rule of school management by making a punishment out of a school task.

The raising of *qualitative* standards, however, is quite another matter. The unruly school is almost always deficient in the quality of work attempted and completed. The ground prescribed by the course of study may be covered in a way, but the very fact that the school is unruly will mean that it is covered in a careless, slipshod way. A school of this type distinctly needs more insistence upon accuracy where accuracy is a virtue; heavier stress upon neatness where neatness is a virtue; greater emphasis upon rapidity, deftness, and readiness of response where these qualities are virtues. It is vastly more difficult to devise means to these ends than to assign ten more pages or twenty more problems. But effort in this qualitative direction will pay large dividends in an improved school spirit — provided, of course, that the increased demands are made so skillfully as not to be interpreted by the pupils as penalties imposed for disorder.

The Use of Objective Scales and Tests in raising Qualitative Standards. — There is here an excellent opportunity for employing the objective standards that are being so rapidly developed for the measurement of educational progress, — the Courtis arithmetic tests, the Ayres and the Thorndike handwriting scales, the Hillegas composition scale, the Harvard-Newton scale, and the like. There is some question as to the accuracy with which these various scales actually measure the progress of pupils in the various school arts, but irrespective of this question, they may be used as a means of developing an effective attitude toward the work.

The Courtis tests are made up of standardized exercises in the fundamental operations (the "facts" or "tables") and in the simpler reasoning processes of arithmetic. By making use of the charts which are furnished with these exercises, the teacher may show each pupil how far he is from the "norm" or "average" pupil of his age, and just where his weakness lies, — whether in the rapidity with which he can make the number combinations or in the accuracy of these combinations. The average for the class can also be represented graphically, and the class can be shown precisely where it stands with reference to other classes.

The two handwriting scales can be used most effectively for measuring the advance of each pupil from month to month in legibility and neatness of his handwriting, and in comparing the progress of groups of pupils. The composition scales enable the pupils to compare their own work with typical exercises that have been carefully graded and scientifically evaluated; and although their utility from our present point of view, — namely, insuring an objective attitude of the pupils

toward their work, – is not so clearly marked as in the case of the arithmetic and handwriting scales, they can be profitably used in the seventh and eighth grades and in the high school.[1]

As means of directing the attention of the pupils toward their work and away from the mischief-impelling stimuli of the schoolroom, these scales have a marked advantage in that they represent objective rather than subjective standards. It is one thing to say to a pupil, "Your writing does not please me; you must improve it." Here the teacher is being pleased or displeased, and the subjective attitude is being encouraged on both sides. It is quite another thing to say: "Here is a handwriting chart used throughout the country to find out just how well or how poorly people write. Let us see where your paper stands on this scale." The teacher is now no longer the judge and the pupil the culprit. One is not combating the other, but both are looking toward an objective goal, and the way is open for the teacher to come into his true function, – not that of a taskmaster, but rather *that of a guide and counselor to the pupil, pointing the way and showing the means toward an achievement the worth and significance of which the pupil can grasp.*

[1] The Courtis tests may be obtained at small cost from the World Book Co., Yonkers, New York. The Ayres handwriting scale in a very convenient form is supplied by the Russell Sage Foundation, New York City, at five cents a copy. The Thorndike handwriting scale and the Hillegas composition scale are published by Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City. The Harvard-Newton scale is published by the Aldine Company, New York City.

It should not be inferred from this discussion that the approval or the disapproval of the teacher is an unworthy reward or penalty for good or poor work. In a well-ordered and well-disciplined school, where an effective spirit has been established, the teacher's approval and disapproval may be the most effective of all rewards or penalties. But we are now dealing with the unruly school where, by hypothesis, the prevailing attitude of the pupil is hostile to the teacher and careless of his or her approval. Indeed, in such a school, the teacher's open disapproval is often the prize that most pupils seek — so twisted have their ideals and standards become with the decay of the school's *morale*.

Encouraging Pupils to compete with their Own "Best Records." — A caution that must go with this suggestion of "stiffening" qualitative standards suggests itself at once. It is the troublesome problem of "individual differences." If one raises standards, one tends to discourage those who are at the weaker end of the scale of ability, thus increasing rather than diminishing the likelihood of disciplinary difficulties. Here the way out involves another shift in the pupil's point of view — and also, perhaps, in the teacher's point of view. While it would be impossible and probably unwise entirely to eliminate emulation and rivalry as school incentives, these forces must be supplemented by another principle which has been rightly emphasized in recent discussions of school management: the principle, namely, of encouraging each pupil to compete, not only with the records that other pupils make, but also with *his own best previous record*.

Here, again, the objective scales may be employed to

good purpose. The significance of the individual curves that can be plotted for the Courtis tests, for example, may be made intelligible to upper-grade pupils, and offer effective incentives for putting forth effort toward improvement. Records of individual growth may also be charted in other subjects.

In one school, for example, the per cent of correctly spelled words was computed at regular intervals from a sample selected at random from the composition work of each pupil for that period. Practically every pupil in the room strove valiantly to increase this per cent each month. The handwriting scales, as has been suggested, lend themselves admirably to the problem of recording individual progress. Practically all of the "habit" or "drill" subjects (arithmetic, spelling, basic reading, penmanship, and oral and written composition) may be employed in this way to stimulate self-rivalry.

Encouraging Group Rivalry. — The evils of individual rivalry that are likely to handicap efforts at raising qualitative standards may be counteracted, not only by stimulating individuals to compete with their own best records, but also by encouraging rivalry between *groups* rather than between individuals. The advantage of group rivalry lies in the fact that it stimulates *all* of the pupils to do their best work for the good name of the group. Where competition is strictly individual, the weaker members of the group will become discouraged and quickly drop out of the race, leaving the honors to be struggled for by two or three of the brighter pupils.

But where groups are pitted against one another, the score of each individual is a factor in the average score of the group, and the pressure of the group upon each individual will, under ordinary circumstances, be sufficiently heavy to insure a maximum of effort.

Thus rooms of the same grade in a city system may very profitably and with little danger of injustice engage in spirited competitions of various sorts, — spelling contests, arithmetic contests, geography contests, handwriting contests, history contests, and the like. And it is quite possible, by dividing a single class into two or more groups, to obtain the same advantage of collective competition.

Summary. — In the unruly school, it was said, the teacher is on the defensive, and the activity of the pupils is devoted in large part to "making trouble." To transform this attitude effectively, the pupils must come to feel the compelling force of the work and the compelling force of the social group. In the unruly school, the latter force makes for disorder; hence it, too, must be transformed. The first step, then, is to "make the work the master," and to insure the occupation of the pupils' minds by the tasks for which the school exists. One means toward this end is to raise the qualitative standards of work through the various devices just discussed: (1) the use of objective scales, (2) encouraging pupils to compete with their own best records, and (3) encouraging collective or group competition. It is clear, also, that the latter measure will do something to stimulate the responsibility of the group for the con-

duct of the individual. This problem, however, we shall discuss in detail a little later. We have still to mention another means of "making the work the master,"—namely, the employment of the "individual assignment." This will be the theme of the following chapter.

Questions and Exercises

1. In what ways, if any, is the following precept impracticable in school discipline: "The pupil should never be required to do anything for which he does not understand the reason"? Name some requirements of school work or of school management that could not be met under a thoroughly consistent application of this precept.

2. Find in your own experience instances of holding yourself to disagreeable tasks because of the ultimate end to be gained. Compare with experiences in which you have been held by the will of another.

3. Name some of the things that you now do or leave undone because of the "pressure" of the social group. What is the difference in your own experience between tasks or sacrifices that are necessitated by the "collective will" of your fellows and the tasks and sacrifices that are necessitated by the individual will or "fiat" of some one in authority?

4. Discuss the practicability of limiting the school work of each pupil to the studies and activities for which he has an aptitude or a liking.

5. Can you find in your own experience an instance of work which, if prosecuted systematically and successfully, is always pleasant and agreeable?

6. What is the difference between raising the standards of work "qualitatively" and raising these standards "quantitatively"? Give illustrations.

7. What are the advantages of using the standard tests or "scales" as means of raising qualitative standards?

8. Distinguish between "rivalry between individuals," "self-rivalry," and "group-rivalry." State the advantages and limitations of each type of rivalry.

9. Devise means for applying the principle of self-rivalry in the study of the different school subjects.

10. Under what conditions may group-rivalry be most effectively stimulated? Illustrate the application of this principle to the different school subjects.

CHAPTER VI

Transforming the Unruly School: (C) The Employment of "Individual" Assignments

A second suggestion for transforming a bad school spirit is to make a wide use of what is called the "problem interest." An individual assignment for investigation and report involves a type of individual responsibility which the pupil usually feels more keenly than he feels his responsibility for class assignments. The latter, of course, must be given; lessons and problems that are common to all of the members of the class are essential if the aim of education is to be realized; but the former is especially important in the unruly school as a means of gaining the coöperation of recalcitrant pupils. It is again to be noted that this is the kind of "discipline" that the pupil will meet in his later life. He will be held responsible for the accomplishment of certain specific and individual tasks, and under the lash of this direct responsibility it not infrequently happens that men who were refractory schoolboys settle down to industrious and well-ordered lives. The individual problem, carefully administered, represents a type of experience that will probably do more to teach the boy or the girl the basic moral lessons of work and industry than any other means that the school may devise.

The Pupil should feel a Responsibility to the Class as well as to the Teacher in working Individual Problems. — It has just been said that the individual problem must be carefully administered if its rich disciplinary values are to be realized; and this involves, first of all, that it be clearly related in the pupil's mind, either to some need that he feels in his own life for the material which the problem will produce, or to some need that the group feels. The latter is the more important factor, and individual assignments should, if possible, be made with a distinct reference to the group needs.

For example, a teacher of our acquaintance asked a pair of troublesome boys to measure off a rod, a hundred yards, a half mile, and a mile on a route familiar to all of the pupils so that the class might have an objective standard for reference when distances were under discussion. The work, if we remember aright, was done outside of school hours, and quite willingly. The results were reported by the two boys with obvious pride in the achievement. They had seen surveyors measuring with the chain and were not at all averse to carrying the tape-line through the streets. In this same school, individual pupils were assigned to find out the prices of different articles of commerce, and report to the class the data which were then used in the construction of problems.

The "lantern lesson," as employed in a certain system of schools, is also illustrative of this social use of the individual assignment. Each school in the system possesses a stereopticon, and a large collection of slides, classified into topic groups, for instruction in geography and history, is provided at the central office. If a sixth-grade teacher wishes to give a lesson, let us say, on London, she sends to the office for the

London slides. Different pupils are then assigned slides for discussion. If one is given Westminster Abbey, for example, he will be responsible to the class for giving a clear, succinct account of the Abbey, and to do this he must look up the data in all of the sources that are available, prepare his topic for a three-minute presentation, and be ready at the time of the lesson to take entire charge of the exercise while this particular picture is on the screen. Pictures collected from magazines and other sources, and mounted on cardboard, could be similarly utilized.

The late Professor F. L. Charles collected, with the assistance of elementary-school pupils, a mass of valuable information regarding the feeding habits of birds. Individual pupils were assigned to watch the birds during half-hour periods from early morning until dark, noting the kind and amount of food brought to the nest for the mother and the young. The assignment involved a type of observation that would naturally interest the normal child, but, in addition to this, it emphasized the significance of systematic work and close attention in a way that the pupils could thoroughly appreciate, for the fact that inaccuracy of observation or failure to watch the nests continually would invalidate the results was quite within their comprehension and an effective group pride in the efficiency of the investigation was easily developed.

Individual Problems should have a Value clearly understood by the Pupils. To assign individual problems simply as tasks imposed in the way of punishment would be fatal to the purpose that we have in mind. Penalties and punishments there must be, we may say now in anticipation of later discussion, but school tasks, let us repeat, should never be employed as penalties.

Our problem here is to transform the attitude of the pupil by indirect means, — by noncoercive means (except as the work itself or the pressure of the social group is a coercive force). Individual problems, then, should never be employed simply for the sake of "keeping the pupils occupied"; indeed, if the pupil is not to become disgusted with the whole policy of individual assignments, great care must be exercised to avoid the collection of data that cannot be digested and employed to good purpose. How to make these individual reports thoroughly valuable is likely to tax the resourcefulness of the teacher, but time and energy spent in planning for this work will usually bring most gratifying results. The following suggestions may be helpful to the young teacher in organizing this phase of his work:

Types of Individual Assignments. — In the teaching of *geography*, Sutherland[1] advises the keeping of a weather record, with two observations daily (one at nine in the morning and one at four in the afternoon) and the correlation of the recorded data with the following facts: time of plowing in the spring; time of planting and seeding various crops; time of appearance of crops above the ground; time of flowering of strawberries, raspberries, plums, and other fruits; time of commencement of haying, and of harvesting various cereals; time of ripening of various fruits; time of migration of wild fowl and birds; time of leafing and fall of leaves in deciduous trees; the date of breaking

[1] W. J. Sutherland, *The Teaching of Geography*, Chicago, 1909, p. 231.

up of ice in large rivers and bays; the date of greatest rise and of lowest water in streams. Information of this type could be profitably collected by individual pupils, and made of large value in the study of geography.

If a goodly number of textbooks in *history* are available, individual pupils may be asked to look up and report to the class the variations in the treatment of the same topic in the different texts. In some cases, rather wide differences will be found, and even discrepancies and inconsistencies will appear in statements that would ordinarily be taken as facts. Where such discrepancies are found, the individual assignment may again be employed to trace the difficulty to its source and to determine, if possible, what the facts really are. The same treatment may be applied to texts in geography, physiology, and in other school subjects.[1]

In connection with *reading*, many excellent suggestions for individual assignments may be gained from the special textbooks on the teaching of reading. The method advocated by Professor S. H. Clark,[2] for example, involves a careful study of the selection in hand for the purpose of determining just how much stress should be given to each word in oral reading in order to express the precise meaning of the author. By assigning different parts to different pupils, this procedure will do much to stimulate individual responsibility. The class exercise

[1] The writer is indebted to Professor L. D. Coffman for this and other suggestions in connection with individual assignments.

[2] S. H. Clark, *How to Teach Reading in Public Schools*, Chicago, 1903, ch. v.

may then be devoted in part to a critical discussion of each pupil's rendering of the part assigned especially to him.

To the suggestions mentioned above for making individual assignments in *arithmetic*, the framing of "original" problems by the pupils may be profitably added.

"Children should be permitted to 'make up problems.' This is another excellent device for stimulating vigorous thinking [and, we should add in the present connection, for realizing the disciplinary advantages of the individual assignment]. The best of the original problems might be written in a book called 'Our Original Arithmetic' or 'Our Own Arithmetic.' The problems thus preserved may be used later for review purposes. Whenever the data involved in such problems are of an informational character, they should correspond to actual conditions. For example, it is not wise to assume in a problem that the distance from New York to Chicago is 250 miles; that wheat sells for $6 a bushel and silk for $85 a yard. The duplication of a difficult problem by a simpler original problem frequently clears away the difficulty."[1]

The Framing of Questions by Pupils. — The suggestion just given regarding the framing of original problems in arithmetic illustrates a general practice to which good teachers often resort. At frequent intervals, two or three members of the class are asked to prepare a list of questions on the next assignment; the teacher

[1] J. C. Brown and L. D. Coffman, *How to Teach Arithmetic*, Chicago, 1914, p. 81.

looks over the list before the recitation and permits the pupil having the most satisfactory questions to take the place of the teacher in "quizzing" the class. The main purpose of this device, of course, is to give the pupil a very effective motive for reading the text intelligently, but it is also a suggestive means of applying this principle of the individual assignment. The following report of a lesson conducted on this basis is taken from the *Ohio State School Survey Report*:[1]

"The teacher called the primary history class and said, 'John, you begin.' Apparently each pupil had prepared several questions, not only upon the present assignment, but upon previous work. John read one of his questions and called on Jane to answer. . . . Another was called on. The pupils then informally discussed the question. The teacher occasionally commended, added to the question and to the answer, but the recitation was strictly a pupils' exercise. The teacher inspired enthusiasm, energy, and control as well as diligence in the classroom. This shows what can be done by a 'live' teacher with practically no equipment."

The "Project" in Manual Training as a Type of Individual Assignment. — The use of the term "project" to designate the "problem" in construction work of all sorts, and particularly in manual training, is particularly apt. It implies a plan to be worked out in detail, an idea projected into the future as a guide for systematic effort. This conception of the individual assignment could be profitably applied, we believe, in the

[1] Columbus, 1914, p. 148.

teaching of the " book " subjects, especially in mathematics, the natural sciences, geography, and history. Young,[1] for example, recommends for high school mathematics an adaptation of the laboratory plan of teaching the natural sciences. He would have a special room provided with tables, drawing instruments, large blackboard areas, mathematical models, surveying instruments, balances, steelyards, barometers, thermometers, and other apparatus. Here the pupils would do most of their " studying " for the classwork (which this laboratory work would supplement and not supplant), and they would also be assigned projects and problems, some of which, we infer, might come under our conception of individual assignments.

School " Dramatics " and Festivals as Sources of Individual Assignments. — The current employment of the individual problem is perhaps most clearly illustrated in the dramatic enterprises, festivals, and pageants that are now so important a feature of school life. Here the feeling of individual responsibility is richly intensified by the public nature of the exercises and by the need, very obvious to every pupil, of making the affair a " success." Under the stress of this responsibility, the attitude toward the work of an ordinarily troublesome group of pupils is likely to be radically different from the attitude toward " regular " school work. This suggests at once the importance of insuring a " transfer " of the

[1] J. W. A. Young, *The Teaching of Mathematics*, New York, 1906, ch. vi.

more favorable attitude to the regular school activities. Not infrequently the glamour and excitement incident to the special exercises serve only to render the routine work more burdensome, and thus the disciplinary difficulties are aggravated rather than alleviated. Upon this problem, unfortunately, the advocates of festivals, pageants, and similar enterprises are usually silent. It would seem possible, however, to make clear, especially to the older pupils, the close connection between the daily discipline of the routine work and marked efficiency in the special exercises.

The advantages of the festival from the point of view of our present problem are admirably summarized by Dykema:[1]

"Possibly the most important underlying idea is this: For those who are presenting the festival, there are certain advantages that can hardly be secured in any other way. The responsibility for the occasion introduces a peculiarly valuable motive which affects even the most unresponsive members of the class. The problem of learning has a new aspect, for the question of communication here appears in its best form. To the performers comes a transforming standard; not what we know, but what we can make others know; not what we can feel, but what we can make others feel. Very soon arises a consciousness of that first element of effective communication; namely, absolute clearness and definiteness on the part of the one who is to give the message. Pupils become conscious of their own weaknesses, as they strive to collect the material. In the desire to help others they find they must prepare themselves. There arises a spirit of self-

[1] Peter Dykema, in *The Craftsman*, vol. xii, pp. 640 f. (Quoted by Irving King: *Social Aspects of Education*, New York, 1912, p. 270.)

induced activity which is of the greatest value. Books are read, authorities consulted, pictures studied, that the teacher hardly knows about."

It is clear that the drama, the festival, and the pageant may fulfill an important function in developing among the members of the pupil group a group consciousness and a group responsibility that, again under the important conditions of "transfer" to the routine school activities, may be very effective agencies in transforming the attitude of the pupils toward school discipline. This phase of the discussion, however, will be reserved for a later chapter, our present concern being with the opportunities for individual assignments afforded by these exercises.

Concrete Illustrations of the Disciplinary Employment of the Individual Assignment. — By way of summary of the preceding discussion, two cases may be cited as clearly illustrative of our suggestions regarding the use of the individual assignment as a means of transforming the pupil's attitude toward the teacher and toward school work. The first deals with a tactful method of quelling incipient disorder in a high school assembly room.[1]

The high-school assembly room was nearly full. The weather was of the warm, damp, oppressive sort. The troublesome pupil (a girl) was growing restless and looking about for a new and striking way of creating a "stir." She was not inherently mischievous; in general, her impulses

[1] The writer is indebted to Miss Elizabeth Fuller for this illustration.

were unselfish and usually commendable. She was, however, nervous and excitable by nature, acting quickly upon the presentation of a stimulus. The situation was rendered the more critical by the fact that, as she was a natural leader, whatever she did was likely to be imitated by her admiring mates. Dealing with her was consequently a delicate matter.

She began her mischief by making paper dolls. One or two others had already followed her example, and still others were waiting, with alert senses, to see how matters would go before committing themselves to the same diversion. It was clearly the "psychological moment" for action on the part of the teacher. The recalcitrant pupil was evidently awaiting the teacher's move; she made no effort to conceal the dolls upon her desk; her eyes were sparkling and her cheeks flushed. She was expecting a combat — in fact, her whole conduct was a challenge.

"In that brief moment when our eyes met," reports the teacher, "I made my plans. I walked slowly down to her desk, just as she expected, apparently oblivious to the two or three paper dolls on it. Anita braced herself for the impact. 'Anita,' I said in a matter-of-fact tone, 'have you too much work to take a special assignment in English?' She was so suddenly taken aback by the unexpected request that she was momentarily thrown off her guard, and I quickly followed up my advantage. 'That conversation between Priscilla and Nancy in to-morrow's lesson is very important, but hard to read because of the dialect. It needs special preparation. Will you be responsible for Priscilla's part?' Anita promised with an entirely different expression on her face. Without glancing at the desk or at the neighboring pupils, I walked away and proceeded to assign Nancy's part to another pupil. The paper dolls unostentatiously disappeared from Anita's desk and she became absorbed immediately in a book, — not *Silas Marner*, by the way, but her

geometry. For the rest of the period, the atmosphere of the entire room was one of deep, unbroken study. Nor did Anita during all the rest of the year show any tendency to create disturbances that could not be quelled at the moment by a look or a quiet word."

The second case is illustrative of a type of individual assignment that we have not as yet referred to, — intrusting a troublesome pupil with a personal responsibility in order to gain his confidence. It is taken from White's *School Management*:[1]

"Many years ago, the writer heard or read this touching incident in the experience of a teacher who, in his day, was one of the most successful of the Boston masters. There came into his school one morning a rough Irish lad, some fifteen years of age. His rude conduct surprised the pupils; but the master saw his opportunity, and quietly endured the disturbance until noon, when he requested the boy to remain. This was received with manifest displeasure. When the other pupils had left the room, the master requested the boy to come to his desk. This was silently but defiantly refused; but, on being assured that he would not be punished, the boy sullenly came to the master's desk. By a few questions, he learned that the boy had neither home nor friends; that often he had no place to sleep, and often nothing to eat except as he begged it. He also confessed that he had come to school to make a disturbance and see what would be done about it. The master assured the boy that he would like to be his friend, and, if he would come to school, he could help him to better his prospects in life. He then gave the boy a half dollar, and asked him if he would go to a certain place and buy a luncheon for him, naming the articles. This unex-

[1] P. 174.

pected expression of confidence in his honor touched the rough boy, and in a few minutes he returned with the desired articles and the change. The master had won his pupil. He divided his luncheon with the hungry fellow, who at first declined to share it, but, on this being suggested, took it to the cloak room where he ate what was really his only meal of the day. When the school was called in the afternoon, the Irish boy was in his place, changed in spirit and purpose. He continued in school, a home was found for him, and, when we learned the incident years later, he was one of the successful and honored business merchants of Boston."

It is essential that a word should be spoken here against too wide a generalization of specific instances such as those just cited, and especially the case quoted from Mr. White. The problem of school discipline is extremely complex, and practices that are successful under certain conditions may be quite unsuccessful under conditions that seem identical. The difficulty lies, of course, in accounting for all conditions, and this difficulty stands in the way of anything approaching a "science" of discipline based upon a comparison of cases.

Another source of difficulty in interpreting reports of disciplinary cases is suggested by the tendency of the person reporting to overemphasize the emotional elements and thus invalidate the use of the case as a basis for a rational, empirical study of the disciplinary problem. Mr. White's illustration, while clearly indicating a type of treatment that may be beneficial in certain instances, is to be somewhat discounted for this reason, — and also because of the uncertainty that must always attach

to third-hand or fourth-hand reports. We shall have occasion to reiterate this caution in succeeding sections.

Questions and Exercises

1. Give a clear illustration of the method of teaching through "problems." Compare assignments of the same problems to the group or class as a whole with the assignment of individual problems. Which serves the better to stimulate individual responsibility?

2. Devise stimulating individual problems for a fifth-grade arithmetic class, a fourth-grade geography class, and a seventh-grade history class. Can you think of concrete applications of the principle of individual assignment in the teaching of formal grammar, composition, literature, and spelling?

3. Name the principal dangers that should be avoided in employing this principle of individual assignments as one means of transforming an unruly school.

4. What are some of the advantages of having pupils frame questions and problems related to the subject-matter that they are studying? What are the limitations of this practice?

5. What is the significance of the term "project" as used in manual training and related subjects? What conditions should be met by the "projects" if they are to stimulate individual responsibility in an effective way?

6. Under what conditions will a temperate employment of dramatics, pageants, and other public or semipublic exercises stimulate individual responsibility? What dangers would you have in mind in employing these devices? Have you ever known them to be employed with evil effects?

7. Under what conditions would you give a very troublesome pupil unusual responsibilities for looking after certain

phases of school routine, or for certain trusts (taking messages to the principal, going to the store to purchase supplies, and the like)? Under what conditions would these practices be looked upon by other pupils as offering a reward for misconduct?

8. Note at a teachers' institute or similar gathering the concrete instances of classroom practices used by the speakers to illustrate their principles. In each case ask yourself (and perhaps occasionally the speaker) how far it is safe to generalize from the case cited. Ask in how far the principle that is illustrated would apply in situations where the conditions were slightly different.

9. An institute instructor once drew a heart-rending picture of a girl who was kept after school for tardiness when, upon investigation, it was found that this girl had to prepare the breakfast at home and wash the breakfast dishes before coming to school. The attending teachers inferred from the narration of the incident that the speaker disapproved of punishing pupils for tardiness. Could the instance be legitimately used to support this belief? What important principle of school management could legitimately be illustrated by the incident?

CHAPTER VII

Transforming the Unruly School: (*D*) Stimulating Group Responsibility

The source of greatest difficulty in the unruly school lies in the fact that the "group sanctions" attach to the wrong kind of behavior. Under any conditions, a large proportion of the pupils will strive for the approval of their fellows. As was suggested in an earlier chapter, some will not be largely influenced by this factor, but these are distinctly atypical. What is ordinarily termed the "goody-goody" child will be tractable and docile even under classroom conditions that make disobedience and disorder the lines of least resistance; and the naturally vicious, the abnormally "willful," and the inordinately lazy individuals will be sources of disciplinary difficulty even when the "fashion" of good order has been as firmly established as possible. These are the specific variations which will be dealt with later. For the present, our concern is still exclusively with the mass of normal pupils.

The Importance of Developing Group Responsibility. — The objective point in this connection is so to organize the group activities that the group sanctions will attach to order and industry, and impel the normal pupil to

conduct himself consistently with the welfare of the group. This is the characteristic *par excellence* of the " well-disciplined " school. Nothing else will take its place as a factor in what may be termed " educative " discipline, — that is, in the type of discipline that will be effective in molding permanent habits, standards, and ideals in the pupil body. Schools that lack this group consciousness may, it is true, be dominated by a strong teacher, and these schools may be characterized by a measure of order and industry quite meriting the approval even of the most critical observer, but it is likely that a prolonged study of the situation would reveal antagonisms and enmities that have only been covered up and not destroyed by the vigorous but not wholly successful methods of the martinet. The situation, in other words, is not likely to be permanent unless the control is kept at a high tension, nor is it likely to result in an effective and sympathetic attitude of the pupils toward law, order, and properly constituted authority. It is in this particular that the ideal of school discipline has been most radically transformed within the last quarter century. The older idea was that of the teacher as a " master "; the present-day idea is that of the teacher as a *counselor and guide*.

The Limitations of Group Responsibility: *The Old Idea of the Teacher as a Master to be Modified but not entirely Abandoned.* — What has just been said, however, does not mean that the older idea is to be entirely abandoned. The ideal relationship between the teacher

and the pupil body is somewhat analogous to the ideal relationship between parents and children, between the wise employer and his employees, between a responsible official and his subordinates. The fact of *responsibility*, in other words, must never be forgotten by the teacher, the parent, the employer, or the official. The responsibility must, in turn, be balanced by a proportionate measure of *authority* which must be clearly recognized by the pupils in the school, the children in the family, the employees in business and industry, the subordinates in all forms of organization. But granted these two factors — first, the appreciation of responsibility by those in authority, and, secondly, the recognition of the authority of those who are responsible by the subordinates — the functions of the school, the home, the private business, or the organization are best fulfilled when there exists a perfect *rapport* between the two parties, when coercion is least in evidence, and when harmonious, intelligent, and sympathetic coöperation is most in evidence. But the fact of responsibility in each case may mean at times the exercise of authority with full rigor. The teacher at times must command rather than lead or guide, just as the father must insist that his will be carried out, the employer that his demands be met, the responsible official that his orders be obeyed. The new ideal of discipline does not mean that the authority of the teacher is to be surrendered or that his responsibility for the welfare of the majority is to be lessened. It is important that this principle be emphasized because

there has been a tendency to interpret the new ideal of discipline as meaning the surrender of authority by the teacher, and the reduction of the school to a self-governing community which, under a régime of this type, quickly becomes an ungoverned and ungovernable community.

The Danger of purchasing Order with Favors. — Nor can any institution supported and commissioned by the people as a whole to instruct and discipline the children of the people afford to *buy* the obedience and industry of its pupil body as if these were favors to be given or withheld at will. The greatest danger in a democracy is typified by just such practices: the tendency to infer that, because the forms and restrictions of government "come from the people," any individual among the people, recognizing his own right to an "equal voice" in making these forms and restrictions, may violate the forms and override the restrictions at his pleasure. As Perry[1] so aptly states the case:

"The individual as a subject is a unit, but as a sovereign he is a fraction. The confusion arises when the individual, realizing that he is a unit subject, concludes too that he is a unit sovereign."

The attempt, then, to build up an effective social spirit in the school through the granting of privileges or immunities that may be interpreted by pupils as bribes to order and industry is to be looked upon as bad practice.

[1] A. C. Perry, Jr., *The Status of the Teacher*, Boston, 1912, p. 9.

Certainly proposals implying that those in authority are incompetent to manage the school and suggesting the inference that the pupil body must be bribed, cajoled, or flattered into compliance with reasonable demands, point to a type of "self-government" that will spell anarchy in the end.

A situation was recently brought to the attention of the writer which both illustrates this danger and typifies the evils that are likely to accompany a short-sighted policy of pupil self-government. A small city has been for some years the scene of factional difficulties in connection with the administration of the high school. Principals have succeeded one another with alarming rapidity, first this and then the other faction coming into control, displacing the former incumbent, and installing his successor. Further than this, active representatives of the two factions have openly gone into the school and organized the pupils for or against the ruling administration. As a result the discipline of the school has become completely demoralized. The pupils openly boast that it is through their good-will that a principal or teacher holds his or her position. Under a condition of this sort (intensified as it happens to be at the present time by a weak-kneed superintendent who curries favor with the pupils by encouraging them in the belief that they are governing themselves), the ends for which the school exists are quite negated, and the lot of the self-respecting classroom teacher is intolerable.

Here we have the evil tendencies of a democracy in an exaggerated form. Pupils have come to look upon order, obedience, and industry as favors that they have the power to bestow in return for certain favors which those in authority bestow upon them.

The "Honor System" as a Case in Point. — It is, indeed, a difficult matter to judge in every instance whether a practice or policy that promises immediate success in meeting a desperate situation will prove ultimately and permanently successful, or whether it will in the end give rise to results that are worse than the initial evil. The "honor system" as a cure for the evils of cheating in examinations is a case in point, and illustrates admirably both the advantages and the dangers of stimulating group responsibility for individual conduct. An animated discussion of the ethics of the honor system as applied to college administration appeared recently in the columns of *The Nation*,[1] and many of the points brought out in this discussion have direct reference to our present problem.

The initial article took the form of a letter to the editor from Professor O. W. Firkins, attacking the honor system primarily on ethical grounds. The doctrine upon which the system is based, he contends, "favors interpretations which its upholders would be the first to reject, since they subvert the foundations of morality." He goes on to say: "The student who is encouraged to think that his honesty is the proper reward for his teacher's obsequious withdrawal [from the examination room], proceeds to the pleasing inference that his cheating is the fitting punishment for his teacher's continuance in the room. Thus for the wholesomely rigorous maxim of our forefathers, 'No honesty, no trust,' is substituted the emasculating and corrupting motto, 'No trust, no honesty.' To what consequences, in the application of

[1] Issues of May 7, 14, 21, 1914, and succeeding issues.

this doctrine in the wider school of life, might not the apt pupil in this form of casuistry be persuasively and rationally led? The disbelief of his hearers in his words will constitute in his mind an authorization to lie; the refusal of a firm to give him credit will be interpreted as a license to purloin its goods. A high-minded university cannot stoop to ask its students to be virtuous in return for this or that act of consideration on its part; it cannot buy their integrity."

W. A. Colwell,[1] in replying to Professor Firkins, does not take issue on the point of ethics that the latter raised, but rather denies that the student's attitude under the honor system is that of one who is being bribed. After pointing out the two essential features of the honor system (first, the pledge not to cheat, and, secondly, the pledge to report to the student committee any one detected in cheating), he says: "The virtuous student receives no *quid pro quo*. His honesty is not conditioned upon his teacher's absence or presence. . . . Exactly the same credit redounds to the individual member of the group as to a member of any other self-governing community — and no more. He has only done his duty when he obeys and upholds its laws." He further contends that, *if the honor system works*, "the sense of responsibility for one's self and for the group, which it develops, is worth much, and it is a distinct advance over any system of inspection, but each system must of course be judged by its results, and *if the students do not enforce the honor system, it becomes a wretched farce and should be abandoned.*"[2]

These two statements from divergent points of view indicate very clearly both the very real dangers and the very effective virtues which inhere in the doctrine of pupil or student self-government. *The form or the letter*

[1] *The Nation*, issue of June 4, 1914, p. 663. [2] Italics ours.

counts for little; the spirit or the attitude is all-important. A scheme of self-government that succeeds in one school may work havoc in another, and the success of the honor system, like the success of any other form of self-government, depends upon conditions that are not always met simply by establishing the system. To the pupil or the student, the examination may be the most important event in his school life, or it may be merely a huge joke. If it is the former, the honor system, unless rigorously administered, will be interpreted as an injustice by the really honorable pupils, for they will see that others by cheating obtain with a minimum of effort the same rewards for which they themselves must struggle. If it is the latter, an " honor system " will have but negligible influence in any direction, and is more likely to become part and parcel of the joke than to serve as a means of inculcating the ideals of group responsibility.

J. K. Stableton[1] has called attention to the marked sense of injustice that many pupils feel when the teacher " trusts the class " at examination time.

". . . The teacher says . . . 'I want them [the pupils] to feel that I *trust* them.' 'It makes them *honest*.' . . . The teacher . . . held to the thought that she must be careful not to make them think she mistrusted them, and in so doing gave the ones inclined to take unfair advantage every opportunity to do it. The result was that there was dishonesty throughout almost the entire class. On talking with some of the class they said: 'Mr. Stableton, in an examina-

[1] "Examinations, How?" *School and Home Education*, June, 1914.

tion it is fair for everybody to have the same show, and it is not a fair examination when every one does not have the same show.' 'We don't believe in cheating, but when the teacher lets every one who wants to cheat, cheat, and grades them just as if they had been honest, all we can do is to get help just as the cheaters do, so that all of us may have the same chance.' 'We don't think we are dishonest, but we do think the teacher ought to make her examinations mean something.' 'None of us is proud of the grades he gets in this kind of an examination.'"

The paramount difficulty lies, then, in insuring the appropriate attitude in the pupil, — the attitude of responsibility as a member of the group for the conduct of all of the members of the group, including himself. No one in his right mind could assume that this is a simple problem to be solved merely by the establishment of certain *forms* of government, — the difficulties of developing in adult communities an effective group or collective responsibility are all too discouraging. Nor do we think that it would be at all wise to attempt through a forcing process to stimulate group responsibility in a pupil community to a point that would be unattainable in an adult community. Generally speaking, the operation of group sanctions is most effective when least in evidence. By this we mean that the pupils who are actively engaged in their work, who feel the responsibility for fulfilling the demands that fall upon them individually, will react *as a group and in a very effective way* against conduct that is inconsistent with their welfare and with the standards that have been tacitly accepted as govern-

ing the situation. In short, the steps for transforming the unruly school suggested and outlined in the three preceding chapters, and other measures of an analogous type, should serve *automatically* to create the appropriate social spirit, — to make the individual feel the compelling power of the group standards toward right kinds of conduct.

Specific Measures that may be taken to intensify Group Responsibility: *Demanding Collective Reparation for Collective Offenses.* — We have just said that it will probably be less wise to *force* group responsibility than to depend upon its automatic development through the operation of other factors. There are, however, occasions when this group responsibility can and should be directly appealed to, and if these occasions are handled skillfully, the net outcome should be an increased efficiency of this force in controlling the behavior of individuals. An instance quite typical of such an occasion is furnished in the following case:[1]

Mr. McCormack, principal of a large high school, was confronted with the imminent danger of a mutiny caused by a very trivial occurrence at a rehearsal of the school chorus. A boy of sensitive and refractory temperament wore a pair of low shoes to rehearsal. A mischievous fellow pupil, sitting behind him, reached under the seat and removed one of the shoes which was promptly passed around among the male members of the chorus. A little disturbance was thus caused, and the teacher reprimanded the pupil who had lost his shoe,

[1] T. J. McCormack, "Utilizing Moral Crises for Ethical Instruction," *School and Home Education*, December, 1913, pp. 123 ff.

and finally sent him from the room. "The student departed from the room, vowing he would never enter the organization again; and his muttering having been overheard by his comrades, some of them incidentally remarked that if he were not allowed to reënter the chorus, they would also refuse to participate in its exercises. A mutual understanding or misunderstanding, *of which no one was the author and no one was the ringleader*, arose; an indefinable atmosphere of mutiny and conspiracy which no one could trace to its origin and font was created. On the following day the boys of the chorus did not appear, and the calamitous situation was created."

A situation of this sort is the most difficult of all disciplinary difficulties to deal with. The first principle of effective discipline is to locate responsibility for disorder in an individual or in individuals. But here individual treatment was impossible. The offense was a group offense. "I then decided," says Mr. McCormack, "that the crime or offense that had been committed was a *collective* crime or offense, and should receive a *collective* solution. I called the boys of the chorus together in conference; told them frankly of the difficulty in which I had been placed; that a grave offense, in fact the gravest possible offense against a school, a society, or a nation, had been committed,—namely, a mutiny, a conspiracy, which was tantamount to treason; that the offense had not been committed by an individual and hence no individual could be punished; that a *social or institutional injustice* had been committed, and that collective, institutional amends should be made. I showed them how, if such practices were continued, the life and peace of the school would be threatened, that at present the position and livelihood of one teacher were at stake, and depicted how, out of an insignificant and trivial accident, by a subtle social interplay of thoughtless words and actions, a situation had been created

which, though it had to be removed, every one saw and felt I was powerless to resolve. I asked them as friends if such were not the case; told them that I knew that not a single individual person present had been guilty of the offense committed; that it was a collective crime with which they had only partly and ignorantly identified themselves, but that it was a hideous reality nevertheless."

The boys were deeply impressed with this serious outcome of a careless prank, and the principal availed himself of the psychological moment to show what society would justify him in doing in a case of this sort. He pointed out that he could take any member of the offending group and punish him for the sins of the group as a whole. He showed that this had been done in the past and cited the case of the Chicago anarchists. "This idea of the punishment of the innocent seemed to horrify them, but the manner in which we had approached our problem had made the situation and the significance of all its dangers so apparent and real that it began to dawn upon them that I was not only right, but also not so powerless as I had professed to be. I had, in other words, taught them an impressive lesson in civics and in social and institutional ethics.

"And what was the result? The lesson, and not the misdemeanor, now occupied the forefront of our collective thought. Both students and I felt that the lesson towered ineffably above the crime, and in our corporate joy of moral conquest, we were almost glad that the moral dereliction had occurred."

With this favorable attitude, the solution was simple. The principal proposed a collective apology as a proper punishment of the group for this collective offense, and this apology was presented before the whole school by a selected spokesman who chanced to be the lad whose missing shoe had given rise to all of the difficulty. "The sequel was felicitous

in the extreme. Everybody felt relieved and happy, and everybody felt satisfied that justice to all parties had been done. Incidentally, all members concerned learned a lesson in civic and social responsibility, in the danger of conspiracies, in the heartlessness of the law, and in the possibility of extrication from difficult circumstances with credit to all concerned."

Rallying the Pupils to support the Good Name of the School. — One occasion at which a direct appeal may be made to the responsibility of the group as a whole, then, is when collective offenses analogous to that just described have been committed, and can be adequately met only by collective reparation. Another legitimate occasion is when the good name of the school as a whole is at stake, and the pupils can be rallied to support the school's reputation. Excellent instances of this are furnished by the " school surveys " which have been so numerous within the past few years. During a survey, a system of schools is necessarily " on its best behavior." This spirit animates every teacher and is likely to animate every pupil. Almost without exception,[1] the reports of these surveys remark upon the excellent order and discipline that the investigators found in inspecting classroom conditions. Some of the reports state that in visiting hundreds of classrooms, not a single case of disorder was found. Any one even slightly familiar with school work would conclude at once that this condition is brought about by the presence of investigators and

[1] The notable exception is the Report of the New York School Inquiry.

the tension of a situation that all recognize as critical. The reports go further than is necessary when they imply that this represents permanent and long-existing conditions in a large system of schools. But, even if the excellent order is due in part to the presence of an investigating body, one would not deny for a moment its " tonic " effect upon the future conduct of the pupils. Their group loyalty has been appealed to, and appealed to effectively. Their collective pride has been aroused, and one of the first steps in the development of a healthful and permanent " fashion of order " has been taken.

Encouraging Pupils to criticize One Another. — Undoubtedly the encouragement of mutual criticism among pupils may be made an effective device for securing attention, and it may perhaps be listed as one means of stimulating group responsibility. The practice, however, involves rather serious dangers. Children who come to look upon correcting others as a virtue are likely to become hypercritical and disagreeable, if not unbearable. Nevertheless, the device rests upon very powerful instinctive forces, and if it could be employed without deleterious results, there would be no doubt of its value. Some teachers certainly employ it very effectively.

One teacher writes to me as follows: "I have charge of an eighth-grade grammar class comprising thirty-eight pupils. There are six or seven 'troublesome' pupils in the class. As a method of arousing interest and handling the questions of discipline, I have encouraged the pupils to

criticize each other. There are a few leaders in the class who took to the plan quickly, and their interest and effort brought the other members forward. While one pupil is reciting, the class listens attentively. After the pupil has finished, those who have doubts regarding the correctness of the recitation rise, and, in a courteous manner, ask questions (more or less 'leading') of the one who has made the mistake. Often the questions are so direct that the one who has made the mistake is able at once to make his own correction.

"I have seen timid pupils become so interested in participating in the 'game' that timidity slipped from them at once. The consciousness that they 'knew' gave them a confidence that they had not felt before. . . . During five months' trial of this plan, I have never seen a pupil irritated or angry because of a criticism. One boy has given me great help. He has been most persistent after every mistake. This persistency has aroused every other member of the class to the closest attention when he recites to see if, by any chance, some one may not 'come back at him' effectively. But through it all there is the spirit of good comradeship."

The need of caution in the employment of this device has perhaps been sufficiently emphasized, but a practical corrective that will tend to offset the obvious dangers may be suggested. It has come to us from a successful superintendent who has seen clearly the dangers that the hypercritical spirit involves.

"In all of our schools we seek to establish the proper attitude toward criticism. We fight sullenness and in every way we appeal to the pupils to avoid 'pouting.' For example, in the reading classes we ask the pupil to criticize his own reading, and to this end we suggest schemes for criticism.

When a pupil admits that he has not read as well as he should, he is requested to try again. This procedure is varied, of course, for different subjects, but always we try to have the child appreciate the necessity for criticism and correction, and to realize that those who criticize are not necessarily his enemies."

Espionage and Talebearing as related to Group Responsibility. — One of the marked difficulties with all forms of pupil or student self-government that place responsibility directly and explicitly in the hands of the pupils or students themselves is that an ethical question of large importance in the eyes of children and youth is inevitably raised to the fore. The " honor system," for example, compels the student to report those among his fellows who cheat on examinations; the " pupil-city " or " school-city " forms of government have their officers corresponding to the police, and also encourage in all possible ways the reporting of offenses by " citizens." An organized and carefully fostered system of espionage is a necessary part of the formal machinery.

The influence of organized forms of pupil self-government in teaching pupils to guard their own rights through informing on offenders, of distinguishing between "tattling" and giving testimony, is, indeed, urged by some of the propagandists of this movement. Ray,[1] for example, in commending an organized system in which espionage plays an important part, advances the following argument:

[1] J. T. Ray, *Democratic Government of Schools*, Bloomington, Ill.; quoted by King, *Social Aspects of Education*, p. 295.

"Will not the young man who thinks it right not to tell on his schoolmates, and who is allowed to believe so, make the future alderman who thinks it honorable to refuse to expose the briber who offered him a thousand dollars for his vote? In short, will not the man be what the boy was taught to be? Can the impure spring have flowing from it anything but an impure stream? As the child's community life is in school, so will be his civic life in after years.

"What should school life teach the boy? It should teach him that he is part of the school community — responsible for its acts, and affected by every act of his schoolmates. He should, therefore, be taught that the Mosaic law, the English common law, and the statute law of his state make it the duty of every citizen to testify when called upon; that hiding a crime makes him a party to it. He has, therefore, no right to set these principles aside in his school life, either because of his own wishes, or the false idea of the teacher. He should be taught to see clearly that the restrictions placed upon his actions in school are due chiefly to the abuse of liberties by a few of his schoolmates, and he should, therefore, be directly interested in the conduct of these schoolmates. He should be taught to feel that the rightly disposed boys should assert themselves as positively and persistently for good conduct as the careless or indifferent boys do for evil."

Can an effective group responsibility be engendered without an organized system which rests upon a system of mutual espionage? It is true that the espionage which these organized systems involve is somewhat different from that type of reporting offenses which has been stigmatized for untold generations as "talebearing," for these systems usually involve the organization

of a pupil court before which offenders are tried and before which the " testimony " is given. Notwithstanding this condition, however, the system has a certain fundamental defect: it is artificial, — a more or less literal imitation of the cumbrous and far from perfect system which has gradually developed in adult society; it has not evolved naturally in a juvenile society to meet the needs of that society. The boy who believes that telling on his mates is contemptible may grow up to be an " undesirable citizen " because of his later unwillingness to report offenses in adult society. But the boy who is taught that espionage is a virtue (and he will not distinguish very clearly between " talebearing " and " giving testimony ") may also develop into a type of citizen that is to the minds of some equally undesirable, — the officious meddler and the inveterate scandalmonger. Adult society has sanctioned the giving of testimony against offenders, but it has hedged it about by elaborate safeguards, and has recognized that it is a necessity reserved for serious cases which imperil social welfare. It is indeed a necessity born of the conditions of social survival; it is a virtue because of its social necessity, not a necessity because of its inherent virtue. Until it is demonstrated that the school group needs this kind of a virtue for its survival, it may be safely concluded that the deeply seated prejudice against talebearing and irresponsible espionage has a worth and a meaning that merit respectful consideration and investigation before the prejudice is abandoned.

An interesting *questionnaire* investigation of the attitude of men and women toward the prejudice against talebearing was made by H. E. Hall and reported in *The Outlook*.[1] A hypothetical situation was described. Two boys were playing at school. "A" told "B" that he would throw a snowball through a school window. "B" did not reply. "A" carried out his promise and "B" witnessed the deed. The teacher asked each boy singly if he knew who broke the window, and if he did, to name the culprit. Mr. Hall then raised the following questions: (1) What should "B" say when asked if he knew who broke the window? (2) What should he say when asked to name the culprit? (3) Should the teacher have asked the questions? (4) Should the teacher have the same right as a court in compelling testimony? (5) Should children in general be taught in the schools that it is their duty to tell the truth about wrongdoing when questioned by one in authority?

The answers received from teachers, from men and women in other walks of life, and from school children themselves indicate a bewildering variety of conviction and opinion. The various replies as published in *The Outlook* would make — allowing for some little "coloring" which would be unconsciously introduced to make the anecdotes as interesting as possible — an excellent "source book" for the study of school ethics. It is sufficient to say in the present connection that one will find in the replies published, respectable and numerous company, upon whichever side of the controversy he desires to align himself.

While occasions may arise when it will be necessary to compel an individual to give information regarding

[1] "Who Broke the Window?" *The Outlook*, Jan. 11, 1913, pp. 75 ff., and subsequent issues.

the misdeeds of another, steps should first be taken to obtain the information from the culprit himself. One teacher gives the following suggestions: Where a fault cannot be definitely located at the outset, and where it is particularly inimical to the welfare of the school, he calls attention, day after day, very briefly to the misdemeanor, stating that he expects the guilty individual to come to him in private, tell him all about it, and make the proper reparation. This continual impression, he tells us, invariably brings about the desired result. Sooner or later, — and usually before the direction has been repeated many times, — the offender comes forth and the matter is settled. It is very likely that, where others know about the matter, a very salutary influence will be exerted upon the individual chiefly concerned to make the confession. This, at any rate, is the explanation that the teacher in question offers for the unvarying success which he has met in applying this method. Every one who is involved is restive and unhappy until the matter is cleared up, — provided one does not permit it to be forgotten. There is good psychology in the suggestion.

Pupil-Government Organizations may serve Temporary Purposes. — The employment of the self-government plan as a temporary device for initiating something akin to group responsibility may, however, be clearly justified in its results. Here the various activities partake of the nature of a "game" by means of which the machinery of civil government may be made intelli-

gible to the pupils. The following account illustrates the way in which the plan may work for a brief period at least:

"The class contained a small proportion of pupils who lacked a 'sense' of personal responsibility, and two pupils who were real 'problems.' We decided to organize a legislative body. This was done in due form. The legislature then elected a sergeant-at-arms who, in turn, appointed deputies. The watchword of the class became 'Self-Control'; the motto, 'He who can govern himself can govern a nation.' The sergeant-at-arms and his deputies performed their duties in a dignified and courteous manner. There was no suggestion of the 'monitor' attitude.

"Each day the sergeant would appoint some member to bring to the class the following morning some incident in which self-control played an important part. This incident was related as part of the morning exercises. During the day the sergeant-at-arms and his deputies had all matters pertaining to discipline and order in charge. These duties involved certain routine activities concerning the care of the room, the bookshelves, blackboards, and plants. In cases of 'discipline' the sergeant or a deputy would courteously admonish or warn an offender. If the offense was continued, a note was made of the error.

"On Friday evening the impeachment committee met. The defendant with his witnesses and attorney appeared before the judge and the jury. Testimony was given and arguments were advanced. The jury then retired and discussed the evidence. The sentence, imposed by the judge was always taken most seriously by the culprit and by his fellows.

"The plan worked so well that it was continued through the term."

It should be very clear to one at all familiar with children that a device of this type may work admirably for a brief period, but that extreme caution should be exercised in continuing beyond the point where the pupils fail to take it seriously. This point will almost certainly be reached sooner or later, and thereafter the order of the school is likely to be seriously imperiled by its operation.

Segregating Group Responsibility by conferring Authority on Older Pupils: the English System. — One way in which to escape the pitfalls of the schemes of pupil self-government that have been experimented with in American schools is illustrated by the system developed by Thomas Arnold at Rugby and imitated very successfully by other of the English boarding schools for boys — and lately, indeed, introduced in a modified form into day schools by Professor J. J. Findlay, of Manchester.[1] This system, instead of being a blind imitation of the forms of adult government, is both a natural evolution from the needs and nature of school life and a much more adequate representation of the actual adult situation than is the "pupil-city" organization. In essence it selects the older pupils who have proved their worth, and makes them responsible for the younger pupils. Adults and children look upon espionage quite differently when it is practiced by one to whom authority has been duly delegated than when it emanates from one's own peers; and the English system has emphasized this

[1] *School Review*, vol. xv, pp. 744 ff.; vol. xvi, pp. 601 ff.

vital difference. Both responsibility and authority are natural attributes of maturity and demonstrated ability; they do not sit well on young shoulders; and youth, of course, is a relative matter; to the child of ten, his fellow of fifteen is well fitted with years.

The English system, however, could hardly be applied to American conditions except under wide modifications. The grouping together of pupils of the same age (the same mental age, at any rate) is much more strongly characteristic of American than of English schools, and the advantage that might accrue to placing responsibility in the hands of older pupils is largely unavailable. There are, perhaps, some suggestions for experimentation in graded elementary schools and in high schools. It may be that the appointment of "prefects" from the upper classes, giving them some measure of authority over the control of pupils in the school yard, might issue in commendable results in the development of a sense of responsibility upon the part of the older pupils, and in stimulating the younger pupils to strive for similar recognition when their turn should come.

The Development of the "Fashion" of Good Order does away with the Necessity for Formal Systems of Self-Government. — The answer to the question, Can group responsibility be developed without a system of mutual espionage? is best found in concrete cases — and these cases can be multiplied almost indefinitely in the better American school systems. In these schools, there is much self-government, but it is unencumbered

by forms and institutions. It is a type of self-government adapted to the needs of the community. There are no courts through which to express social disapproval. There is no need for courts. There are no officers in addition to the regular school authorities, and the control of these officials is little in evidence. There *is* social disapproval, and there *is* coercion by the social group, but it works in silent and half-conscious ways, precisely as social disapproval works in adult communities.

Into a high school of this type an adolescent boy once came — "cocky," conceited, burning to "show off." At his first recitation, he ventured an impudent sally, and looked about him for the applause that his former experiences in another type of school had led him to expect. The class took no apparent notice of his impudent remark. The teacher said nothing to him, but simply passed on to another pupil in recitation. It took this boy two days to learn that a type of school spirit with which he was entirely unfamiliar governed that school. It took him six months to undo among his fellows the disastrous results of those first two days. There was no outward coercion. It was the silent, resistless force of social opinion telling him in unmistakable terms that he had made a fool of himself. It is a harsh corrective, — the rod would sometimes be far easier to bear. But it is effective — and it is something more: *it is the normal way in which adult society exerts its coercive force over its component members.*

The social sanctions in this particular school had been

turned in the direction of order and industry. The self-government was as complete as it can ever profitably be in an immature social group. The lessons that emanated from a school life of this type are lessons that will "function" later.

The Rôle of Pupil Organizations in School Government. — There are, however, certain types of organization, not concerned with the government of the school as a whole, that may do a great deal to help develop this group responsibility. Clubs and societies formed for social, literary, athletic, or dramatic purposes, and enrolling in the aggregate practically the entire student body, form a most fruitful field for nurturing the group consciousness and building up an effective *esprit de corps*. It is clear that the expressions of the social impulses in the formation of the organizations may work for evil as easily as for good, and their existence may mean the development of the very worst types of social sanctions. The history of the high school fraternity sufficiently demonstrates that something more than a mere provision for the expression of social impulses is needed. There must be on the part of the school authorities a measure of supervision, most tactfully administered, if the valuable outcomes of the school's social life are to be realized. Once started in the right direction, the pupil organizations will fulfill an important function in setting and maintaining worthy standards of conduct; started in the wrong way, they may be hotbeds of trouble, of disaffection, and even of immorality and vice.

How to establish the right precedent in this matter, and particularly how to reorganize a social situation that has become demoralized are themes that have been vigorously discussed by high school workers. The following suggestions are taken from a recent treatment of the problem:[1]

". . . Every society that receives recognition should have its 'advisory' board. The word 'advisory' is used rather than 'control' or any other word, because it is intended that the board shall act in just that capacity. The board should consist of two teachers who are chosen by the pupils and approved by the principal, and of two or more students, including the president and secretary — according to the size of the organization, — and also the principal as an *ex officio* member. The teachers on the board are not to act as censors, but as leaders who are interested in the work of the society, who will attend its meetings, and who, by their wisdom and experience, will lead the organization successfully in its undertakings. In this way there can be no possible clash between students and faculty, and harmonious coöperation will be the result."

Mr. Davis further recommends that the teachers who serve on these various advisory boards unite, under the chairmanship of the principal, as an "advisory council" charged with the general administration of all student social affairs. The pupils who serve on the advisory boards, with certain other pupils elected at large, may profitably be organized into a student council to coöperate with the advisory council of teachers.

[1] Jesse B. Davis, "The Administration of the Social Activities of High School Pupils," in *The Modern High School* (edited by C. H. Johnston), New York, 1914, pp. 410 ff.

These recommendations apply chiefly to the large and medium-sized high schools and to large grammar schools organized on the departmental plan. There is no reason, however, why, in smaller high schools and even in upper-grade classrooms, the social propensities of the pupil body may not be profitably directed through the organization of literary, social, and athletic clubs. The " machinery " here should be restricted to the few forms and provisions that are absolutely essential to the administration of social affairs in the interests of a wholesome school spirit. A modified form of Mr. Davis's plan might well be tried even in these small schools, — for the theory back of this proposal seems to be entirely consistent with the fundamental principle that we have repeatedly emphasized, — namely, the establishment of relationships of sympathetic coöperation between the teacher and pupil body to the end that the teacher while still preserving his authority and recognizing his responsibility, will be looked upon by the pupils as a guide and counselor rather than as a task-master. And this, after all, is the important relationship to be preserved in all of the efforts that are made to utilize the social instincts and impulses of the pupils themselves in establishing the " fashion " of order and industry throughout the school.

Questions and Exercises

1. Is it true in your own experience that boys and girls in school will strive for the approval and admiration of their

fellows more frequently and more whole-heartedly than for the approval of their teachers? In any case, which would be the more desirable motive from the point of view of the best development of the child?

2. Name some of the steps that you would take to make yourself in the eyes of your pupils a counselor, leader, and guide rather than a master or a martinet. In how far would you strive to retain the prerogatives of the master?

3. What are some of the helpful analogies between the efficient teacher and the efficient parent; between the efficient teacher and the efficient employer of men in industry; between the efficient teacher and the efficient military commander? Name in each case some of the points at which the analogy must be given up.

4. Would you agree with the statement that measures which the pupil interprets as designed to purchase order with favors are to be condemned? Are there any exceptions to this principle?

5. What is the difference between the principle, "No honesty, no trust," and the apparently converse principle, "No trust, no honesty"? Suppose the latter principle to be generally accepted, what results can you conceive to be inevitable?

6. What are the advantages and dangers of placing the responsibility for the conduct of individual pupils upon the class as a whole? At what points is the analogy with adult self-government justified? At what points does this analogy fail?

7. Cite instances among the nations of the world where the mere *form* of self-government does not insure real self-government. As you understand such nations, where does the chief difficulty seem to lie?

8. Can you furnish instances, similar to that given in the text, which illustrate offenses for which the group rather

than any single individual must be held primarily responsible? In your opinion, if the individual responsibility cannot be located, is it legitimate to inflict summary punishment upon one or more members of the group as reparation for the group offense? If this is ever justified, under what conditions and why? Are there analogies in civil or military government? (For example, was the alleged summary punishment of individual Belgian civilians by the German army of invasion an analogous case?)

9. Why has "talebearing" or "tattling" come to have so unsavory a name? Is its bad repute justified? What is your own immediate reaction toward a "tattler"? Under what conditions, if any, would you justify talebearing?

10. What are some of the dangers of encouraging school children to report the faults and misdemeanors of their fellows? Can you frame a principle that will be a serviceable guide to the teacher in discouraging this practice?

11. How would you answer the questions stated on p. 108, regarding the broken window?

12. What are the important differences between a system of "pupil self-government" as this term is ordinarily understood and the plan of delegating responsibility to the older pupils? Are there any analogies between the latter practice and the actual workings of effective self-government in an adult society?

CHAPTER VIII

Transforming the Unruly School: (*E*) The Tonic Influence of a Regimen of Work

The various steps that may be taken to establish a "fashion" of order and industry in an unruly school would be incomplete without a reference to the tonic effect of a systematic "regimen of work." When we say that the school should develop in its pupils a "general habit of work," we are voicing a truism with which no one will disagree, but which offers the teacher no suggestion for actually establishing this desirable habit. Habits have an irritating tendency to be specific rather than general; they must be built up as responses to particular situations. The specific habit that the pupils of an unruly school need to establish is the *habit of settling into the attitude of work and industry at a certain definite time and of maintaining this attitude during a certain definite period.* Work time must be distinctly understood as a time when *nothing but work in the sense of serious and aggressive effort will be tolerated.*

The Disciplinary Effect of a Regimen of Work. — The child or youth is to be envied whose lot is cast in a well-regulated and well-disciplined school, where this regimen has been thoroughly established. There is

a most effective inspiration in the community of active, aggressive concentration which such a school typifies. It is distinctly a civilizing agency, making for systematic growth and development, and teaching the fundamental lessons of self-control and self-discipline through acquainting the child with the value of systematic effort, and through accustoming him to the necessity for holding in leash momentary desire and impulse. It is one of the important steps to be taken in "making the work the master."

The nine-o'clock bell strikes. The pupils who have been talking and playing together, freely and spontaneously, instantly assume another attitude. The shouting and the laughter — most excellent in their place — cease. The pupils pass quietly to their rooms. A few moments devoted to opening exercises and the work of the day is begun cheerfully and vigorously. Systematically, step by step, the problems are solved, the projects pushed to completion, the lessons mastered. An hour and a half of buzzing industry passes. Then the bell rings and for fifteen or twenty minutes the older spirit of freedom and play reigns supreme. Then back again to the work.

One who participates in this type of daily program, working with competent, sympathetic teachers who are themselves inspired by the quiet, orderly, pervasive atmosphere of effort and accomplishment, who will brook neither shirking nor shamming, and yet who know how to make the work itself compel the effort, can hardly fail to acquire the all-important attitude implied in the phrase "general habit of work." We are tempted to say that eight or twelve years of this regimen would, almost independently of the other

lessons learned in school, fit the pupil for the important duties of life. Certainly it would contribute an indispensable element toward this end.

Establishing the Regimen. — But how to establish this specific habit in all of the pupils of an unruly school is quite another matter; for, by hypothesis, this is the type of program that is most unfashionable here.

The first suggestion to the teacher is to have a good working " time-table " and carry it through *to the letter.* There is something tonic in the clean-cutness of time edges; in opening on the minute and closing on the minute. There is something bracing in the brisk and alert beginning, in a clear and decisive close; and if a " brisk " carrying through of the program is added, the formula is complete. Through the power of suggestion, mental alertness spreads like a contagion. And if this atmosphere can be created at the outset, the chances are that the desirable habit will be formed with a minimum of trouble. There are few precepts of school management more significant than that which emphasizes the importance of the right start.[1]

Nervous Tension must be Avoided. But the difficulty lies not so much in starting vigorously as in persisting vigorously and in closing vigorously. And the kind of vigor that means undue nervous strain and tension is certain to defeat its own purpose because it uses up all of one's energies at the outset and leaves one helpless at the equally critical close. It has furthermore

[1] Cf. the writer's *Classroom Management*, New York, 1907, ch. ii.

the wrong kind of suggestive influence upon the pupils. We have seen teachers gather themselves together as for a fray; bustling about like busy little switch engines in the freight yards; making much rasping and mechanical noise. But what is needed is not so much the bustle and confusion of the freight yards as the sustained efficiency of the long straightaway run; steadily onward across the fields and meadows and through the woods; taking the grades slowly but easily; keeping plenty of reserve power for the steeper climbs; coasting down the slopes; and pulling in "on the dot" at the terminal. Huxley, coming up New York harbor, caught the spirit of the tugboat, and exclaimed enthusiastically that he would rather be a tugboat than any other thing not human. There is a certain type of inspiration in a tugboat and in a switch engine. But it is a nervous, jerky inspiration; and what we need in school management is the sustained and restrained efficiency that suggests reserve strength quite beyond the needs of the present moment. It is this type of "vigor" that should be joined with the "business man's" virtues of promptness, alertness, and concentration in attempting to establish a wholesome regimen of work in the unruly school.

The Dirigibility of Enthusiasm. — All of this involves, it may be objected, an enthusiasm for the work of teaching that cannot be made "out of the whole cloth." To be vigorous and alert from nine until four; to keep up the flames of inspiration when every school condition

favors their extinction; to engender enthusiasm over subject matter that one repeats to two or three different classes every year, or (in the high school) even to four or five different sections every day, — this seems to call for a miracle quite beyond human achievement.

If one were to acquiesce in the doctrine of interest that is now current, one would agree that enthusiasm under these conditions is impossible; for this doctrine seems to imply that interest is always determined by the activity and never by the agent himself, — that unless the task attracts in itself, interest and enthusiasm cannot be engendered. This theory is partly true of the child and of the weak, undisciplined adult; and with individuals of this type, little dependence can be placed upon the power to engender enthusiasm over one's work whether the work is intrinsically attractive or not. But for the tyro in teaching one of the first lessons to learn is that *enthusiasms are dirigible;* in some measure they can be directed at will. In just what measure will vary with individuals, but the power *to become interested in one's work* may be taken as one of the important characteristics of the competent worker.[1] Certainly the teacher who hopes to succeed must learn how to interest himself in each lesson that he teaches. Professor Phelps [2] states the case in words that ring true:

[1] Cf. the discussion of the relation of discipline to the doctrine of interest, ch. xiv.

[2] W. L. Phelps, *Teaching in School and College*, New York, 1912, p. 16.

"Constant and tremendous enthusiasm for the subject taught is essential. When one is actually teaching it, this thing, whatever it may be, should seem to be the most important thing in time or eternity. The late President Harper, who was one of the most brilliant teachers I have ever known, told me that he had taught the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis I have forgotten how many thousand times. I remarked that he always seemed enthusiastic. He said: 'Sometimes I feel wildly enthusiastic; at other times I have no enthusiasm at all. When I have no enthusiasm, then I create it.' It is absurd that a teacher should allow a headache or a sleepless night to affect his teaching. If his health will permit him to enter the classroom, he must teach with zeal and vigor."

Enemies of Enthusiasm. — A phase of the art of teaching so important as this merits the most careful consideration from those who are charged with the administration of schools. An important part of the duty of a superintendent or principal in operating his schools with maximal efficiency is to insure those conditions that will make it possible for every teacher to approach his or her task with maximal enthusiasm and interest. The ideal administrator relieves those who do the actual teaching just as far as possible from tasks and worries that will distract them from their class work. He reduces their clerical labors to the lowest possible minimum; delegates the duties of general administration and control to teachers who are relieved of teaching duties in proportion; and even minimizes the importance of his own office and of "executive work" in general in order that

both teachers and pupils may look upon the work of the classroom as the all-important business for which the school exists. But unhappily there are many supervisors and administrators who do not take this broad and stimulating view of their function. They load down their teachers with extra-scholastic duties and worries; they magnify the importance of clerical, administrative, and executive functions; they break into the regular routine for trivial reasons, and so undo much that the teacher has accomplished toward establishing a wholesome regimen of work; they cater to the good will of the pupil-body and of laymen by placing athletics, dramatics, exhibitions, and other "show" activities on a higher plane than systematic scholastic effort. Under conditions of this sort, the handicap of the teacher in keeping up an inspiring enthusiasm for his own work is greatly increased.

Again, the *short-sighted criticisms of school work* intensify the difficulty of maintaining enthusiasm by querulously calling into question or contemptuously "pooh-poohing" the value of certain subjects that teachers are employed to teach. This condition is inevitable during a transitional period such as the present, when criticism is the "fashion" and when every traditional subject is under the limelight of condemnation. It is rather difficult to engender enthusiasm over a subject that is branded from the housetops as a waste of time, or over processes once thought to be educational in their effect that are now believed by

certain influential reformers to be worthless. There will probably be no relief from this handicap until educators have reached an agreement as to the worthlessness or value of disputed subjects and then convince the public that their conclusions are sound. But there should be some consolation for the teachers who must teach subjects now " unpopular " in the fact that the last word has not yet been said, and that, in all likelihood, the charges that are made are overdrawn for polemical purposes.

Nor are the teachers of the newer subjects relieved from their share of the irritation. Their efforts must undergo a certain measure of distrust from their colleagues and they, too, must live through the critical period of establishing their subjects upon a firm basis. Perhaps their condition is no better, from the point of view of this handicap of distrust, than that of their colleagues in the older disciplines.

Finally, there are the teachers who are forced through necessity to *teach subjects for which they have neither inherent liking nor inherent ability*. This condition is often found in the elementary school where each classroom teacher is commonly required to teach every subject in the program. Indeed the obvious difficulty of engendering enthusiasm for each and every topic has been one of the strongest arguments for introducing the departmental system of instruction and differentiated curriculums into the seventh and eighth grades.

Even under these unfortunate handicaps, however, the

engendering of enthusiasm is not an impossible task as the experience of many teachers abundantly demonstrates. Some, indeed, draw inspiration from neglect, oppression, and opposition, and work all the more enthusiastically because the value of their work is questioned or its relative importance belittled. Others succeed in closing their minds to irritating distractions. Still others assiduously cultivate the attitude of the ancient hero who was given the office of public scavenger; striving, if their work cannot be an honor to them, to be an honor to their work. Some men may characterize this conscious guidance of enthusiasm as a species of self-deception; but, recognizing its necessity and its efficacy in an imperfect world, it would be far more kindly to laud it as a type of self-conquest. To do work that one believes to be unimportant or valueless merely for the sake of getting a living is to sell one's manhood or womanhood for a mess of pottage; to do the work that one must do just as well as it can be done and with all the enthusiasm that one can summon to the effort may be making a virtue of necessity, but it is also taking the first step toward making the work worthy and useful. If people are willing to pay in the coin of the realm for having the work done, the worker may rest assured that it meets some need, and if, under these conditions, he sets his hand to the task, a moral responsibility is his to carry it through in the best possible manner.

Other enemies of enthusiasm lurk in the *individual worries* and *cares* of the teacher; in the *ill health* and

reduced vitality that come from overwork, from insufficient sleep, and from insufficient exercise. Still others are to be found in *unsympathetic supervision* which mixes querulous faultfinding with the minutest portions of praise and commendation. Every worker needs and profits infinitely by a recognition of his efficiency if he is efficient; the normal individual craves this reward far more keenly than he craves material rewards. An important function of the administrator is to develop between himself and his teachers the same attitude of sympathetic coöperation that we have described as characterizing the ideal relation of teacher and pupil. Just as surely as the superintendent is a taskmaster to his teachers, the teachers will be taskmasters to their pupils.

Administrative Difficulties blocking the Development of the Regimen of Work. — In the foregoing paragraphs the importance of initiating and carrying through to the letter a well-constructed daily time-table has been emphasized, and the need of directing one's own enthusiasm to the end that each unit of work may have the quality of businesslike "go" and vitality has been recognized. The difficulty of fulfilling the former condition, however, merits a brief reference. One of the consequences of "enriching" the program of studies has been an increased difficulty of constructing such a time-table, and the still greater difficulty, once the time-table has been constructed, of holding to the limits that it sets. In addition to this, the introduction of new subjects

has necessitated administrative expedients that operate strongly against the development of the regimen of work. The whole system of "supervising" the so-called "special" subjects (music, drawing, nature study, and the like) seems to be a most cumbrous method of getting these subjects started in the schools.

There is very good reason to look upon these more recent additions to the elementary school program as special activities to be looked after wherever possible by *special teachers* rather than by the regular teachers under the direction of *special supervisors*. This plan has been adopted by the Gary, Ind., schools[1] with excellent results. By this plan of organization, the special subjects (such as drawing, music, manual training, industrial work, physical training, and play) are taken care of by specialists, and find a place in the regular program. The "regular subjects" (such as arithmetic, geography, history, language, spelling, and the like) are divided between two regular teachers for each group of pupils, all of the grades being operated on the "departmental" plan of instruction to this extent. The great advantage of this organization from our present point of view is that it permits a regular program to be established and maintained without the interruption and breaking up of routine activities inevitable in a system where the regular teachers work under special supervisors. It also permits a large measure of specialization among the special

[1] See W. P. Burriss, *The Gary System of Schools*. Bul. U. S. Bureau of Education, No. 18, 1914.

teachers, and a goodly measure among the regular teachers, thereby obviating the demand that each teacher should teach all subjects with equal enthusiasm.

Questions and Exercises

1. Note the difference in the meetings of teachers or in the classes that you attend, between those that start promptly and briskly and those that start tardily and without "spirit." Contrast the closing of the exercises from the same point of view.

2. Discuss the relation of the following factors to the establishment of an effective "regimen of work": the teacher's health; the ventilation of the schoolroom; the daily program or time-table; the daily preparation of the teacher; the routine of special supervision (music, drawing, manual training, etc.).

3. In your own experience has the preparation of classes for special exercises, dramatics, pageants, and the like broken up the systematic regimen of daily work in a serious way? Would such exercises be likely to have this effect? If so, what precautions would you take to counteract the disturbing influence?

4. Make a few tests to determine whether you can "direct" your own interests and enthusiasms. William James once suggested that every one should give his will "a little gratuitous exercise every day," — meaning thereby that we should each day do at least one task that we neither "have" to do nor like to do in order to "keep the faculty of effort alive." There is commonly some surprising self-revelation in attempting to follow this advice!

5. Can you suggest ways in which the school may teach pupils to be masters of their interests and enthusiasms rather than to be mastered by them?

CHAPTER IX

Transforming the Unruly School: (*F*) The Place and Limitations of Coercive Measures

The five preceding chapters have emphasized various methods of transforming the spirit of the unruly school primarily by insuring a transfer of the attention of the pupils from idling and mischief-making propensities to wholesome school activities. The methods hitherto proposed might be termed, from one point of view, "indirect" or "noncoercive" methods. Neither designation is quite satisfactory, however, for they are really "direct" in their operation, and they distinctly contemplate a "coercive" influence. This influence, however, as has been pointed out, is confined to the coercion of the work in hand or of the social group, and aims to avoid a feeling upon the part of the pupil that he is being coerced by the teacher or by the school as such.

It has not been intimated that there is no place for that type of coercion which the pupil distinctly locates in the personality of the teacher or in the authority of the school. There are, indeed, occasions in every school when this authority must be exercised in a direct, personal way. These occasions, the type of treatment that

they justify, and the limitations of this type of treatment, will be the theme of the present chapter.

The Scope of Direct Coercion. — Of all of the methods that may be employed in reducing the unruly school to law and order, we place last this method of direct coercion; not because it is the last method to be employed, — a final, "last resort" when all else fails, — for sometimes (indeed, frequently) the *first* step in curbing an unruly spirit will be the direct exercise of authority; but it should receive less emphasis than the methods heretofore discussed because *it is upon the latter that the chief hope of working a permanent and educationally important influence must rest.* The iron hand may be needed to initiate order and to teach the very basic lessons of respect for the authority of the law and for the rights of others; but this initial lesson taught in this way must quickly be supplemented by other lessons in which the primary aim will be to engender something more than a willing or unwilling submission to established authority.

This principle applies with equal force to all forms of civil government. Authority may compel because of its might, and often it must compel because of its responsibility; but the type of order that is most effective is that in which the fact of coercion is least in evidence. In the city and the state, as in the school, the condition that is sought is a "fashion" of obeying the law and respecting the rights of others; and while the forces that *can* coerce must be made plainly evident to those who can be appealed to in no other way, the wise executive keeps them from constantly and irritatingly impinging upon public attention.

The First Principle: Coercive Measures must be Swift, Certain, and Unerring. — The influence of a coercive force is very distinctly a function of the celerity and certainty with which it operates, for the important influence of such a force lies *not so much in its actual operation as in its "moral" effect.* From the point of view of disciplinary efficiency, such bodies as the Mounted Police of Canada, the State Constabulary of Pennsylvania, and the Marine Corps of the United States Navy represent ideal types. The traditions of inflexible loyalty to purpose which have clustered about these organizations have made their very names pregnant with coercive force; and these traditions have accumulated, not because lawbreakers have come to fear the *severity* of the treatment which these police bodies accord to them, but rather because the operations are *swift, certain,* and *incorruptible.* The general respect in which the police functions of the Federal government are held as compared with the police functions of municipalities and states, is due to the same factors. It is not a difference in the severity of the penalties imposed, but rather a difference in the relentless certainty with which crime is detected, located, and punished. The relative freedom of England from serious crime, as compared with the United States, has been attributed to a similar difference in the administration of justice in the two countries.

The authority of those in charge of a school becomes a moral force in the discipline of the school under precisely

the same conditions. "Few rules rigidly enforced" is a cardinal precept of school management. It is the writer's belief that, in this connection, *rigor* is the first principle of success. There are some activities and tendencies that must be absolutely prohibited in every school, and lapses from these requirements should be swiftly, vigorously, and persistently prosecuted. No step is more important than this in the transformation of an unruly school.

What these forbidden activities are will vary in different schools. In old schoolhouses, crowded with children, it is necessary to have rigid rules with regard to the *passing of lines* and to the *movement of the pupils through the corridors and on the stairways*, to the end that perfect discipline may be maintained in case of fire or incipient panic. In modern fireproof structures, built with two or more well-lighted stairways with "landings" breaking the drop from floor to floor, with relatively low "risers," and with well-located exits, the danger from fire and panic is reduced to a minimum, and the same restrictions on the movements of pupils may not be necessary. Again, where school grounds are small, the safety of all pupils will require the prohibition of *certain games* which might well be permitted under other conditions.

There are, however, certain forms of behavior that should be "against the rule" in every school. *Profanity*, *indecency*, the *marking of walls* and other injury to property, *impudence* to teachers and to passers-by, the *throwing of snowballs* in the school yard (except under conditions where this may be done without danger), *playing marbles "for keeps,"*[1] and any

[1] In his *Classroom Management* (1907), the writer listed playing marbles "for keeps" among forbidden activities. Felix Arnold (*School*

other form of gambling, *rough treatment* of younger pupils in the school yard or on the way to and from school, *cheating* in studies or in games, *falsifying*, and *pilfering* fall under this head. Of these, some are so distinctly provided for in the common and statute law, and others are so generally "taboo" among decent men and women, that specific "rules" against them need not be enunciated in school. In general, however, where an act is to be prohibited, the nature of the forbidden act should be carefully explained to the pupils and the reasons for its prohibition made clear. After this step has been taken, lapses from the requirement should be treated as serious offenses against the authority of the school.

In the unruly school, many of the forms of misconduct just noted will be matters of common practice among the pupils, and the teacher or principal assuming charge of such a school will do well at the outset to concentrate upon one or two of the more serious offenses, and "settle" them first. While steps should be taken to change the attitude of the pupils toward the school and its work as indicated in the preceding chapters, it is essential

and Class Management, New York, 1908, p. 351) approves of this "sport" on the ground that it is not primarily a game of chance, that it requires some skill on the part of the player, that it is "a training in eye and hand adjustments," and that it is "a means of developing social control." There are, of course, good reasons for caution in extending the concept of "gambling" to cover innocent sports. It is the writer's belief, however, that marble playing for stakes is an activity that might well be discouraged by the school. Its alleged virtues are extremely questionable, and the writer is convinced that the type of interest that it engenders in the average boy is far from wholesome. With the development of supervised plays and games, there should be smaller and smaller space for these questionable activities.

that the most serious disturbances should be met with firm, determined treatment at the very outset. To permit these forms of misbehavior to persist until one has "gained the confidence of one's pupils" is likely to be fatal; and, beyond this, a clear and decisive triumph at the outset will do much to insure a ready acquiescence in the noncoercive measures.

The Decisive "Coup" as a Means of Insuring Initial Order. — The suggestion just made merits further emphasis. With children as with adults, in school life as in politics, business, and war, a powerful psychological effect is produced by quick, decisive movements that, through their success, immediately establish prestige and authority. The teacher or principal who is called upon to take charge of a difficult school may well look for opportunities to make one of the decisive coups as early as possible. Under these conditions, it is both necessary and legitimate deliberately to take steps that will insure a strategic advantage, — giving one an immediate mastery of the situation and making it possible for one to put into operation the measures that will make for permanent reform. It not infrequently happens, indeed, that a decisive coup at the outset will do away with the necessity for further coercive measures.

A situation has come to the writer's attention which clearly illustrates this principle — although, as in the study of all concrete cases of discipline, it is well to be cautious in making generalizations. It was the first of April, and the upper-grade boys of a large elementary school had decided

among themselves that this day of ancient fame should be accorded holiday distinction. The trouble brewed during the morning recess without coming to the attention of the principal. When he returned to the schoolhouse as was his custom a half hour before the beginning of the afternoon session, he saw at once that something was wrong. There was an ominous silence among the pupils who had gathered on the school grounds, an ominous absence of certain familiar faces, and sundry curious glances portending an excited expectation upon the part of the pupils that something would happen before long. A little inquiry revealed the difficulty. About thirty boys from the seventh and eighth grades had left in a body, and were reported to be trooping down toward the river.

The time was all too short for prolonged meditation. In an emergency of this type, it is quick thought and immediate action that are "indicated." The contour of the river course came quickly to the principal's mind, and with it the opportunity of solving the situation. Telephoning to the attendance officer and to the police department, he secured two large wagons, and a detail of aides for the officer. The boys, he believed, would be found on the bank of the river at the elbow of a sharp bend, — it was a favorite point of rendezvous for fishing and swimming, and was only a short distance from town. The banks of the river rose precipitously on the farther side; there was no bridge and the temperature was still too low to make swimming the river in one's clothing a thoroughly delightful prospect. Within ten minutes after the principal reached the school, wagons with the attendance officer and his aides had started for the river bend; in ten minutes more, the truants were "rounded up" on the river bank, and, recognizing that they had been caught in a trap, they surrendered gracefully, were loaded into the wagons, and hurried back to the schoolhouse, which they reached

only a few minutes after the afternoon session had commenced. They were greeted — not unpleasantly — by the principal and told to go at once to their rooms. But here a murmur of discontent arose. Some even pleaded for the traditional punishment; others sought to gain time (and consequently mitigate the keenness of their fiasco) by arguing the matter. But the principal was relentless. This was the *dénouement* for which he had contrived the plot. They must "face the music" of the ridicule of their fellow pupils who had not yielded to the pressure of misguided leadership. The triumph was complete, and the situation was solved in a trice, amidst the laughter of the many and the discomfiture of the few.

In the foregoing instance, it is not the specific steps that are important from our present point of view. It is rather the efficacy of the quick and decisive triumph which establishes at once the prestige or the generalship of the teacher or the principal; and this generalship the teacher or the principal who expects to deal effectively with large bodies of boys and girls must either develop, or, for lack of it, yield to the inevitable. No changing ideals of school government can change the fundamental principles of human nature. Methods of treatment may vary; the rod may give way; physical compulsion of the old-fashioned type may be discarded. But one factor persists. Boys — and men for that matter — still have an instinctive admiration for one who can quickly and decisively master a situation and change apparent defeat into an unquestioned triumph. And if this triumph comes with little apparent effort, and to

one who has not boasted or stormed or blustered about what he *would* do, it may become one of those fortunate events that live on as "traditions," giving one power and prestige for which he would otherwise strive in vain.

An important condition of this quick, decisive treatment is the absence of further reference to the unpleasant events. The situation has been settled and the trouble should be speedily forgotten. The preservation of the "objective attitude," upon which so much stress was laid in a preceding chapter, is imperiled if the tense situation is permitted to continue. Once the unruly spirit has been subdued by a quick and decisive triumph, the time is opportune and the need imperative for instituting measures which will look toward a permanent transformation of the pupils' attitude toward the work.

The Principle of Persistence. — But if the initial attempt at a decisive and immediate solution of a difficult disciplinary situation is unsuccessful, one is not to conclude that other measures are futile. The invariable tendency of the young teacher is to give up too soon. Where the demand that the teacher is making is justified, it cannot safely be relaxed. Obedience must be secured, and there must be no halt in the proceedings until obedience is forthcoming. Here it is not only permissible but often necessary to drop everything else until one's end is gained.

The following plan, worked out by a group of teachers in the Washington Irving High School for Girls, New

York City, illustrates this principle so clearly that it is quoted in full:

"1. This is a proposition discussed, formulated, and amended in the Teachers' Councils of the Washington Irving High School, and recommended to the Principal for trial.

"2. Courtesy is so valuable as an asset for success in life that I, a teacher, ought to make it habitual in those under my charge.

"3. Silent obedience is a form of courtesy required in business and other organizations, and it is my duty to train this habit.

"4. New and substitute teachers should realize that they can have this if they will insist upon it from the first moment and, if failing to get it, will follow this procedure.

"5. Select one girl from the group of apparent disturbers; never attempt to cure more than one case at a time. Give the scheme a chance to work. Don't talk, don't scold, don't raise your voice. Give her a distinct direction and add, 'Do this silently.'

"6. If the girl disobeys, send another girl for a patrol who will be found on that floor or one floor below. The teacher and the patrol will then give the girl an opportunity to obey.

"7. Patrol and teacher fill out a memorandum . . . for record in the Bureau of Recommendations: 'Smith, Mary, 2B4, discourteous and disobedient. Feb. 19, 1914. Annie White, Teacher; Mary Brown, Patrol. Finally obeyed.' . . .

"8. If the girl fails, patrol will keep her till end of period, giving her an opportunity to add to report: 'I regret my disobedience. I intend to follow all directions of Washington Irving teachers without retort or comment. Mary Smith.'

"9. Remember this is not intended for punishment but for habit formation. Don't talk. Don't encourage the girl to talk. Treat the case like a doctor, quietly.

"10. (Directs that pupil be sent to deputy principal if she still refuses.)

"11. The new or substitute teacher will repeat this over and over as long as the remaining class is not under control. It is not a device aiming at justice or selection of the worst offender or at punishment. It is a demonstration to girls that courtesy and obedience is the inviolable rule.

"12. Other teachers should use this plan when they see the need of it. They know the futility of weakening this process by use except in serious cases." [1]

The above plan, it will be seen, is adapted to a somewhat peculiar situation. The Washington Irving High School is probably the largest school of its kind, enrolling 6000 girls. It is one of the best-known high schools in the world to-day. It is especially remarkable for the effective *esprit de corps* that has been developed in the pupil body, and for the spirit of coöperation that has been developed between the teachers and the pupils. If the beginning teacher in a small and unknown school, having read the above suggestions, will remember that they have been worked out to meet the conditions that exist in one of the best schools in the world, he or she will perhaps be less likely to surrender, to take disciplinary troubles personally, and least of all to fail in the patient, unremitting persistence that is often the sole

[1] Quoted from *Writs of Assistance*, the handbook of the teaching staff of the Washington Irving High School.

condition of success. One may not be able to call patrols or send pupils to the principal or have a convenient Bureau of Recommendations in which to lodge a complaint that may cost a recalcitrant a good job when he or she is through school; but one may at least keep an objective attitude and utilize the means that are at hand with a firm faith that one is acting consistently with recognized tenets.

Where Direct, Coercive Measures are "Indicated." — (*a*) *The Indulged or Spoiled School.* — The type of disorderly school that most distinctly needs the domination of an "iron hand" is the one in which a weak administration has permitted liberty to grow into license, and has encouraged lawlessness through temporizing measures which have effectually placed the "control" of the school in the hands of the dominating personalities among the pupils. The situation which thus arises is an extremely difficult one with which to cope successfully because the custom of obedience has often been completely broken down, and the natural instincts of docility and tractability have been entirely perverted. The following case[1] illustrates very clearly this type of disciplinary situation:

Mr. H—— was appointed to teach the eighth and ninth grades in a town system enrolling about two hundred pupils. Three predecessors had occupied the position in quick succession, each leaving after a few weeks' struggle with the disciplinary difficulties. On the morning when Mr. H——

[1] The accuracy of this case is vouched for by Professor L. D. Coffman.

took charge of the room, he found on the floor literally hundreds of match heads. He learned that the boys filled their pockets with these match heads, slit small holes in the pockets, and then permitted the matches to fall out as they walked about the room. As a result, there was a continual snapping of matches throughout the day. Another favorite bit of mischief was to fill the mouth with very small shot, remove the erasers from the ends of lead pencils, slip in a load of shot from the buccal magazine, and then, with a sly twist of the wrist, send the shot flying through the air. The snapping of the matches and the continual patter of shot constituted an interesting diversion, but the pupils were not satisfied with this. Dead animals — cats, rats, and mice particularly — were smuggled into the schoolroom and hidden in the desks of suspecting or unsuspecting pupils where they were discovered a little later with great surprise and many evidences of disgust, all of which redounded to the keen enjoyment of the smugglers.

On this first day, Mr. H—— waited quietly until he definitely located responsibility for mischief in eight different boys. Then he procured a whalebone whip, and administered to each of the offenders a severe chastisement. This brought the shot throwing and the match snapping to a sudden stop. But, while the room was reasonably quiet and orderly, the spirit still remained antagonistic. Matters went on in this unsatisfactory way until Friday.

It had been the custom to devote each Friday afternoon to "rhetorical exercises," planned and conducted by the pupils themselves. On this first Friday, Mr. H—— followed the habit of his predecessors by withdrawing entirely from the conduct of the exercises, taking a seat as a spectator in the rear of the room. A pupil presided over the program, which was made up of recitations and declamations, concluding with an original "paper" — a journalistic adventure

devoted chiefly to crude jokes and personal "roasts." After the exercises had been completed, the teacher announced that on the following Friday the time devoted to these "rhetoricals" would be limited to the period following the afternoon recess. There was some demurring on the part of the pupils, but the teacher stood firm, and the pupils finally consented. By the third Friday, Mr. H—— had come to the conclusion that the exercises as then conducted were thoroughly bad for the school, and especially subversive of discipline. He then announced that, thereafter, he would look over the "paper" before the meeting. It was presented to him, and he very liberally blue-penciled the coarser jokes. The pupil who had prepared the paper, an adolescent boy, John B——, received it in silence but with a look on his face that betokened trouble. The preliminary part of Friday's program was carried through as usual. When the paper was announced, John arose with flushed face. "Mr. President," he said, "I refuse to read the paper. The teacher has marked out all of the principal items. I move that next Friday we begin these exercises at fifteen minutes after one, and that we prepare them and carry them out without any interference from the teacher." The announcement was greeted with strong approval by the pupils, but before action could be taken, the teacher, who had foreseen this climax, had taken his place upon the platform. In a calm voice he announced that the organization was adjourned permanently, and that there would be no more Friday afternoon exercises until he gave the requisite permission. He then turned to John and told him that he would be excused from school until he had changed his attitude toward those in authority.

John, however, instead of going to his home went to the office of the superintendent of schools. This superintendent attempted to operate his schools by currying the favor of the troublesome pupils. He immediately took advantage of the

situation to establish himself in John's good graces. In a few minutes, John was back in his room with a message from the superintendent to the effect that he should be permitted to remain at his work. Mr. H——, however, refused to admit him. Dismissing his class, he went at once to the superintendent and presented his resignation. Then going to the president of the school board, he explained the situation and gave the news of his resignation. The board was hastily called together. The resignation was received, but not accepted. Mr. H—— was asked upon what terms he would remain, and replied that he would stay if he were removed from the jurisdiction of the superintendent. This was granted, and he was placed in complete charge of his room. John went before the board and pleaded for reinstatement, but the board stood firm and placed the whole matter in the hands of Mr. H——.

At the end of two weeks, John returned to the school which had in the meantime settled down into a wholesome spirit of work and coöperation with the teacher. He was told that he must prepare an apology to the teacher and to the school and read it before the school, and furthermore that he must read it in a manner that indicated clearly an appreciation of the character of his offense and the sincerity of his promises for future good conduct. He prepared the apology and promised to present it in the desired manner, but when the time came, he adopted an insolent and surly tone. Instantly the teacher announced a further suspension. At this point, John broke down and read his apology in a spirit of humility and contrition. He was readmitted, but his spirit during the remainder of the term, while not rebellious, was still far from sympathetic. The school, however, with this one exception, was entirely transformed in spirit and attitude.

It is always important to investigate the *sequelæ* of disci-

plinary troubles, — a precaution that those reporting cases of this type frequently overlook. In this instance, however, the ultimate outcome of the treatment may be inferred from a supplementary statement accompanying the report. Mr. H—— was reappointed to his position for the second year, but declined in order to accept a principalship in a neighboring city. He did not return to the scene of his early experiences until several years later, when he visited the town in the capacity of instructor at the county institute. The first person to greet him at this institute was John B——, who had completed the high school course, and had become a teacher. He had married and was living with his family in the town. He insisted that Mr. H—— remain at his home during the week of the institute. On the first evening of the institute, a reception was given to Mr. H——, and at this reception he met seven of the eight boys who had received summary punishment on the first day of school. They had done well in their school work, and they gave him to understand very clearly that his masterful handling of the school at a critical period was a turning point in their lives. The eighth boy who was punished on that memorable day had moved away from town; years afterward, however, when Mr. H —— was lecturing in the Far West, he met a man who introduced himself as one of the eight recalcitrants. From him, too, there came abundant testimony of the wholesome influence of the vigorous treatment.

(*b*) *The School in Rebellion.* — The instance cited above would serve, in part, to illustrate a case of rebellion or mutiny. There are, however, types of rebellion which are more clearly defined, and which are due to causes other than indulgence or weakness in the school administration. In these cases, coercive measures are al-

most always "indicated" at the outset — always with the proviso that they be supplemented immediately by measures of the type described in the preceding chapters. Rebellion means the end of school government, and if the government is to persist, the rebellion must be subdued. In general, there is in school small place for "treating" with recalcitrants or for compromise of any sort. This practice is, in effect, an attempt to *purchase* order, and against this as a school policy we have already protested. Real and justifiable grievances, here as elsewhere, should certainly be redressed; accusations of injustice must be investigated; and appropriate measures must be taken to insure better conditions if existing conditions are found to be unjust and inequitable. But neither redress nor investigation should be made while rebellion is in progress. Order must come first, and the rights of all, including the teacher, must be guaranteed.

One of the most embarrassing and difficult situations in school administration is created when a classroom teacher, through a series of tactless blunders or careless and perhaps cruel practices, has incited rebellion in the pupil body. The superintendent recognizes clearly that the condition is due in large part to the inefficiency of the teacher, and yet he must support the teacher until order is restored. How to do this in such a way that the administration of the school will not appear in the pupil's eyes to be a party to the injustice is a difficult task. But upon one point there is general agreement: *the teacher must be supported until order is restored.* To

permit the pupils to believe that, by making trouble, they can rule or ruin is to sow the seeds of permanent and ever increasing difficulty; and to dismiss a teacher while rebellion is in progress is to encourage this belief.

(*c*) *Willful Disobedience.* — Individual as well as group rebellion should commonly be treated by coercive measures, although, as we suggested in a preceding chapter, it is sometimes possible in a school where the fashion of order has been well established to let the coercion be of the indirect type. Before this fashion has had an opportunity to become established, however, there are occasions when malicious and intentional misbehavior will need drastic treatment. It is often difficult to determine whether the mischief is intentional or accidental; some pupils, indeed, have mastered in a high degree the art of feigning injured innocence, and these pupils are likely to cause the beginning teacher serious trouble. In general, then, it is well at the outset to note and correct *all* lapses from established rules and restrictions.[1] If the lapse is unintentional, a stimulus to care and watchfulness on the part of the pupil is essential; if the lapse is intentional, the authority of the teacher is under test

[1] "Let the teacher realize that the safety of life here in an emergency depends upon quick obedience, that 90 per cent of fires and accidents are due to disobedience, that every organization, domestic, social, commercial, educational, for some one or more of which we are preparing our students, requires obedience to law and its personal representatives. Then let her get the habit fixed in all persons for whom she is responsible. Every violation weakens the habit and makes harder work for you and for every other teacher." — Washington Irving High School, *Writs of Assistance*, 450.

and must be maintained. The experienced teacher comes to know the symptoms of deceit, and the pupils know that a "bluff" will not "work," consequently they do not indulge in the game; but the beginning teacher is a constant temptation to the wit and cleverness of his or her young charges, and needs — always with the "objective attitude" — to be constantly "on guard."

An extreme case, cited by White,[1] may be profitably instanced in this connection:

"A lady who had had unusual success in country schools was once employed to take charge of a Cleveland school which two successive teachers had failed to control. Nothing was said to her respecting the condition of the school, and she took charge of it, anticipating a pleasant experience in teaching in the city. At noon she returned to her boarding place in tears, and said to her brother that she could do nothing with the boys and had made up her mind to resign and go back into the country. 'I have done my best to interest the boys,' she added, 'and they have simply run over me. Boys have gone head first out of the windows and back again, whistling at me.' — 'Do not think of resigning . . .,' said the brother, 'but go back and put your school in order, and give the boys a lesson in prompt obedience. Ask them to rise quietly at the beck of your hand. If a boy fails to respond, *attend to him.*' — 'Shall I whip?' asked the troubled teacher. — 'Whip? Yes, if necessary,' said the brother, 'and I will furnish the whips. Your school is in rebellion.' She sighed and took the whips furnished, and returned to her school 'to try the experiment.' She came back at the close of school with a look of victory in her face. 'Well, Mary,' said the

[1] *School Management*, p. 208.

brother, 'what kind of a school did you have this afternoon?' — 'I had an excellent school,' she replied, 'the last hour. . . .' — 'But what of the first hour?' said the brother. 'I do not like to say.' — 'Did you whip?' — 'Whip! I whipped a half dozen boys the first twenty minutes, but they "toed the mark" after that. I am going to have a beautiful school.'

"That lady taught in the schools of Cleveland until she went to her reward, and she never whipped another pupil. It is a good many years since the writer gave the above advice, but he would give it to-day under like circumstances."

(*d*) *Malicious Mischief.* — Under this head will come especially "vicious" types of misconduct, such as maltreatment of other (and especially younger) pupils; insolence and insult to teachers and other adults; blasphemy and gambling; and "smartaleck-ism" at fire drills and on other occasions when absolute control is essential to the welfare of the group. Needless to say, the school must treat offenses of this type in such a way as to stamp an effective and emphatic disapproval upon them *in the eyes of all of the pupils.* Here it is not the individual himself that is primarily concerned; it is the group; and measures that may be effective in reforming the individual (such as moral suasion) must be supplemented by measures that will serve to deter others from similar offenses.

The grave danger that is involved in permitting an attitude of "go-as-you-please" obedience upon the part of pupils is only too clearly seen in the report of a school fire in which hundreds of little children lost their lives. The press reports stated (with how much truth we are unable to deter-

mine) that when the fire alarm was sounded, several of the larger boys jokingly shouted "False alarm!" believing it to be "*only* a fire *drill*." This particular incident would probably be accorded small weight by a coroner's jury, but to one who is accustomed to judge the "spirit" and *morale* of school discipline from just such seemingly trivial expressions, the statement is full of significance. If the report is true, it simply means that the school was poorly disciplined, and that the ensuing panic was due, not to "doors that opened inward" (for the doors happened to open outward), but to a lack of control over the pupils. The administration of a school that permits this attitude to develop is essentially weak and inefficient. Where forty or four hundred children of all ages are gathered together, absolute, instantaneous, and whole-hearted obedience to necessary commands is absolutely essential. These commands are not to come, perhaps, every day; but when they do come, there must be no question of the response. Anything in the way of neglect upon the part of the teacher that will make control under panic conditions impossible should be condemned in the strongest terms, — even at the expense of a pet theory of "individual development" with which arbitrary obedience may be inconsistent. *And the only way in which the attitude of obedience can be definitely insured is to treat lapses from obedience at all times as serious offenses.*

Another difficulty arises in connection with the *maltreatment* or "*hazing*" of individual pupils who are either too small or too weak or too complaisant to defend themselves. This type of conduct is perfectly natural and instinctive, and in its free and unrestricted operation it probably fulfills at times an important educative function by acquainting the timid and the weak with the

necessity of standing up for their rights. In practice, however, its virtues are seldom realized; the weak become weaker, the cowards more cowardly, and the strong more arrogant and overbearing, — precisely as "nature" seems to have intended. In any case, whether or not the practices have the sanction of natural law, they are thoroughly inconsistent with the "live and let live" ideal of civilized society — which overrides and countervails natural law at more than one point. In the school, the weak must be protected, and even the cowards cannot be forced to fight!

Petty theft is so common in some schools that teachers and principals are almost driven to lose their faith in human nature. Almost every high school principal who has had under his control a large and cosmopolitan group of adolescents can relate instances of pilfering that are complicated by innumerable factors, — poverty, emulation, jealousy, simple greed, avarice, and the like, — revealing themselves in an apparently uncontrollable form. Pencils, books, hats, jackets, ribbons, pocket books and their contents disappear as if by magic or miracle. Locker systems are a necessary part of the equipment of the modern American high school. And the pathetic element enters when the culprits are detected and their motives investigated. It seems hard to punish boys and girls when the temptation to the offense is often so great, and when the home conditions stimulate anything but a sense of moral responsibility. These are delicate situations and demand delicate treatment,

for it is usually true that the severest punishment is to publish the offense and the offender before the whole school, and to subject the culprit to the most thoroughly degrading type of experience, — the condemning scorn of his fellows. While this treatment may be demanded at times, it is the writer's belief that something less drastic will usually be the better policy. Here it is the individual himself who is primarily the object of all punitive measures. It is his reform that is chiefly sought. The situation is not quite the same as it is when the rules of the school are openly evaded or when offenses that are less generally subject to social condemnation are committed, for in the latter case an "example" must of necessity be made in order to deter others, and to prevent the offense from becoming the fashion, while in the former case, the wholesome reaction of the great majority of pupils can be safely trusted.

The *mutilation of school buildings and furniture* is a type of misconduct similar to willful disobedience; that is, it is likely to spread among the group and to be looked upon by the pupils as "legitimate" mischief — if we may use this term to express the sharp distinction that a boy or girl often makes between something that is merely forbidden and something that is "downright wrong," like stealing. Coercive treatment in the form of swift and certain punishment is clearly indicated here — supplemented at once and gradually supplanted by the development among the pupils of a feeling of pride in the appearance of the school and the recognition

by them of the wrong involved in injuring the property of the people. There is abundant opportunity here for some concrete and effective lessons in civic ethics, — lessons that can be taught successfully in most cases by an informal discussion in which the pupils are gradually led to see that vandalism is only another form of theft.[1]

Insolence and *insult*, especially to those who by virtue of age or sex have been made the especial objects of chivalric ideals, is another form of misconduct that demands drastic treatment. Here it is sometimes sufficient to let the condemnation of the pupil group form the punishment, but, generally speaking, effective correction from those in authority is also demanded, and demanded by the pupils themselves. An inalienable right of childhood is the right to be corrected for unsocial conduct, and here the misconduct strikes against two of the most important and precious ideals that civilized

[1] The casuistic distinction which boys (and sometimes men) make between the property of individuals and the property of corporations or of the state, lies at the basis of much of the vandalism and of the theft of public property in schools. The writer recalls in this connection his own participation as a youth in a system of student self-government in a state institution. The "penal code" of the student body was written out in the form of laws, each law having attached to it the kind and amount of the penalty that its violation would involve. For theft from fellow students, the penalty was expulsion; for theft from the state, the penalty was five black marks — fifteen of these being equivalent to expulsion. Thus in a direct and unequivocal way, an offense against private property was adjudged to be three times as culpable as an offense against public property! Excellent suggestions as to the method of setting pupils right on questions of this sort will be found in an article by F. C. Sharp and H. Neumann, *School Review*, April, 1912.

society has slowly and gradually evolved, — the ideals of respect for age and respect for womanhood.

The writer once listened to an address on discipline given by a superintendent of schools to a group of teachers in an institute. The theme running through the address was an appeal to the teachers not to take too seriously the misbehavior of their pupils, — dangerous advice unless carefully given. The terrible results following from correcting boys for offenses against order and decency were vividly painted, and when the results could not be adequately portrayed, the speaker took refuge in ridicule and sarcasm. Among the "cases" cited, the following is typical of the philosophy of discipline held by this guardian of the coming generation. One of his teachers came to him greatly agitated, and demanded that he punish at once two boys who had insulted her. They were not her own pupils. They were not even members of the school in which she served, but of a neighboring school. It seems that these two lads, however, knew this teacher by name and saw her frequently. She chanced to have auburn hair, and the boys chanced to have, on this particular occasion, a supply of red crayon. The association was inevitable and the impulse spontaneous. Going to the schoolhouse where this teacher served, they wrote her name (with a certain nickname appended) in red crayon on the steps, and then passing down the side walk through several blocks repeated the operation at short intervals on the concrete sidewalk, ending with a particularly ambitious flourish in front of her boarding place. When the teacher left the school, she was greeted with this little personal tribute at intervals all the way home. What mortification she suffered may be guessed. She discovered who had subjected her to this humiliating experience, and reported the culprits at once to the superintendent, asking that he punish the two boys.

The superintendent laughed at her (by his own statement, in which he even expressed great pride that he had not let *his* anger be aroused by this occurrence!). He told her that "boys would be boys," that they had found the crayon and had made the association very cleverly with her hair, and that the best thing for her to do was to take it as a good joke.

Personally, while we have pinned our faith to the virtues of the "objective attitude," we recognize that there are occasions when, for the benefit of the offender if for no other reason, offenses must be taken personally. This is a case in point. Spencer's doctrine of natural punishments has a distinct place here — and it is not necessary to add what the "natural" punishment for an offense of this kind is. Instinct may well be trusted in some situations.

There are some schools in our city systems from which or to which the teachers cannot pass through neighboring streets without being hooted at and "called names," and often for no reason except that their names are known to all of the children of the locality. This is not confined to the "slum" districts; in some cities, the practice is even more common in the residence districts inhabited by wealthy families. We cannot agree that teachers should be expected to "stand" this kind of treatment uncomplainingly. It is, in effect, an affront to the service and should be treated as such. It makes teachers self-conscious, discourages them with their profession and discourages others from entering its ranks. *It is as distinctly against public policy as a similar treatment of the police would be if this were tolerated.* And the best way to discourage the practice, we believe, if complaint

to parents is unavailing, is to appeal to the police to abate it as a nuisance. A teacher's feelings and a teacher's self-respect should be as immune from violation as is his or her private property. Simply because the business of teaching makes one's name known to the undisciplined children of the community, one should not be asked to accept treatment against which other citizens may claim adequate protection. Many teachers, however, suffer in silence, preferring to accept the humiliation rather than have it appear that their school work and the requirements that they have laid upon their pupils have made them " unpopular " and thus brought derision and insult by the way of revenge. This is an attitude which, we fear, is all too common in some communities, and an attitude that is distinctly encouraged by such perverted and socially dangerous ideas and ideals of discipline as those of the superintendent who treated insults offered to his teachers as "good jokes."

Interference from Without, a Handicap to Effective Discipline. — The troubles that arise from the attempt of individual citizens, acting in a private capacity, to dictate the policies of educational administration is one of the heavy prices that must be paid in America for the advantages that attach to the local control of schools; and in no phase of administration are these troubles more acute than in connection with disciplinary problems. The teacher or the principal must see to it that justice is done to all and especially that the rights of the majority are not invaded or invalidated by the whims and

caprice of the influential few, but this often means that disagreeable situations must be faced and rather serious risks of engendering personal enmity must be incurred. It is in crises of this type that the true mettle of the teacher or the superintendent is most clearly revealed. It is, indeed, difficult to strike the right balance, — to prevent firmness from becoming tactlessness and to prevent tact and diplomacy from becoming a ready acceptance of and acquiescence in "bulldozing" threats. As an illustration of the general type of action that is thoroughly consistent with professional ethics, the following instance may be cited:[1]

". . . John N. Davis is one of the men in the teaching profession of whom we should all be proud. And this is the reason:

"Two years ago, John stepped over the border into Menominee, Michigan, to teach school. Things went along nicely there until this fall, when the favored son of the president of John's school board defied the rules of the school by smoking cigarettes on the playground. Mr. Davis took the matter up with the boy's father, but the latter . . . stoutly contended that the boy should be readmitted to school, from which he had been suspended, and practically without any conditions. Unfortunately for this president of the school board, John N. Davis stood 'pat,' and politely informed him that, should the boy return, there would not be room enough for both of them in the same school building. The board met, and before their resolution was cold they had the unqualified resignation of Schoolmaster Davis, followed immediately by the entire school faculty.

[1] From the *Wisconsin Journal of Education*, December, 1913, p. 278.

"Then there was something doing! The people of the city awoke to the realization of the true condition of affairs and compelled the school board to meet and rescind their action, which they did, and a resolution was passed . . . giving Mr. Davis full power and unqualified authority to discipline the school according to his own ideas."

It is when one is face to face with difficulties of this sort that one is tempted to lose faith in the virtues of democracy and especially of local self-government. But the experience just recounted points to the fundamental fact upon which our faith in democracy and in self-government must always rest: when the "people" really understand the situation, their collective judgment can be safely trusted, especially if a moral issue is involved. "Be sure you are right and then go ahead" may be platitudinous advice, but it is a golden help in time of trouble. If it is necessary to go before the people, one need not fear if one's issue is a moral issue; to which, perhaps, one might add a precept of political strategy: Where publicity is inevitable, be sure to get to the public *first*.

The Principle of Individual Treatment. — While it is true that some offenses against school discipline are collective in their nature, and demand collective treatment and collective reparation,[1] these are less frequent in their occurrence than the offenses that are purely individual, and subject to individual treatment. Indeed, the young teacher will do well to avoid attributing

[1] For example, the case cited on pp. 99 ff.

disorder to the class as a whole, — and it will take some little self-control not to do this. The first tendency will undoubtedly be to attempt to check disorder by an impersonal " scolding " of the class as a whole. The practice is commonly weak and ineffective, only serving to intensify the unfortunate conditions.

One of the clearest precepts of class management, then, is to *locate responsibility in the individual offender*, and deal with him as an individual. Other offenders may continue their disturbance while the teacher is engaged with the one who has been detected. These can be taken in their turn. If, however, the class is condemned indiscriminately, the very fact of group coöperation in mischief is, as it were, officially recognized, and disastrous consequences in the way of rebellion or permanent disaffection may result.

The supervision of study and assembly rooms not infrequently involves a succession of irritating disciplinary conditions. The room, perhaps, has been placed in charge of a beginner who has yet to learn the art of control. The pupils naturally seize the opportunity for diversion. A low humming is heard throughout the room, not the lauded " hum of industry " but the hum of mischief. The pupils seem intent upon their work, and are appropriately shocked and surprised, when the supervisor announces that the humming must stop. Or a stealthy shuffling of feet disturbs first this quarter of the room and then another quarter, followed by the same expressions of injured innocence when its abatement

is demanded. To pound on the desk, lose one's temper and give vent to noisy disapproval are forms of treatment to be carefully avoided here. Find one offender, then another, and another if necessary, and deal with each as an individual. Sometimes one will have to wait for the opportunity, but waiting is vastly better than a premature explosion. Sneaking mischief of this sort justifies rather severe treatment, for its very existence in a form that is concealed and difficult to uncover imposes a task upon the teacher that may use up far more time and energy than a much more serious offense, and it is better to " make an example " of one or two offenders through suspension than to risk a continuance of the disturbance.

The general principle of individual treatment should not, however, preclude warnings or suggestions given to the group as a whole. Even under the conditions just described, a good-natured appeal to have the disturbance stopped may be all that is necessary, and this expedient should certainly be tried. What is to be avoided is an attempt to punish the group collectively or indiscriminately, either by scolding, by threatening, or by retaining all of the pupils after hours.

As a rule, also, it is well not to rebuke an individual pupil by name in the presence of the class. He should be spoken to privately, the teacher going to his seat or calling him to the desk or detaining him for a moment after the others have left. To rebuke publicly may make a hero of the offender and consequently render

much more difficult a quelling of the disorder. There are exceptions to this general rule, but it is, we believe, a safe rule for the beginner to follow. To quote again from Professor Phelps:

"When there is a little plague spot of irruption in the classroom, when there is individual disorder or inattention, it is better to speak to the class as a whole, rather than to single out one person by name. And if there is one boy or girl who persists in repeated offenses of this nature, then it is well to keep the culprit a moment after class, and, after every one has gone out, to talk very frankly, very earnestly, but never angrily or sarcastically with him. Sometimes this method will result not only in complete reformation, but in transforming the individual from a leader of disturbance into an influence for good order. Very few boys and girls can resist a quiet, personal talk."[1]

Questions and Exercises

1. What is the relation of coercive methods of school discipline to the methods discussed in preceding chapters? Why are the latter methods to be preferred where it is possible to apply them effectively?

2. "Really effective discipline is rarely expressed; it is rather *felt* by every one under its control." This statement is made by Professor O'Shea in his *Everyday Problems in Teaching*. What steps would you take to insure this end? Why is a constant "show" of power and authority inconsistent with good discipline?

3. What steps would you take in reducing a spoiled or indulged school to a regimen of law and order?

[1] W. L. Phelps, *Teaching in School and College*, p. 27.

4. List the more important characteristic symptoms of a school in rebellion. Discuss the advisability of treating with the leaders as a basis for suppressing or abating a rebellion in school.

5. How is willful disobedience to be distinguished from thoughtless or unintentional misconduct? How would you deal with a pupil who pleaded in extenuation of his misbehavior that he "did not intend to do anything wrong"?

6. "The greatness of a fault depends partly on the nature of the person against whom it is committed, partly upon the extent of its consequences; its pardonableness, humanly speaking, on the degree of temptation to it." (Ruskin: *Seven Lamps of Architecture.*) How would you apply this principle to the faults of school children? Is it possible to recognize and appreciate the temptation to which the individual has been subjected and still recognize the necessity for correction?

CHAPTER X

Coercion through Rewards and Penalties

It is through the agency of rewards and penalties that coercive measures are commonly made effective both in civil government and in school government.

The Psychology of Rewards and Penalties. — The principle underlying the employment of rewards and penalties is very simple. If a certain kind of behavior invariably brings an unpleasant consequence, this type of behavior will tend to be repressed or inhibited; if, on the other hand, a certain type of behavior invariably brings pleasant consequences, it will be confirmed and repeated. "Learning" is always a process of modifying behavior or conduct, and the principle just formulated lies at the basis of the learning process. "Teaching" is a process of inducing others to "learn," and the most primitive type of teaching is to arrange the experiences of the learner in such a way that desirable modes of conduct will result pleasantly, and undesirable modes of conduct unpleasantly.

The *readiness* or *celerity* with which behavior is modified under the stimulus of pleasant or unpleasant consequences is recognized among psychologists as a most important index of intelligence. Among the lower

forms of life, behavior is likely to be modified very slowly; in the higher forms of life, a single unpleasant experience may permanently change conduct with reference to the situation in question. Upon the higher levels of intelligence, too, the *immediate* consequences of different types of conduct become much less significant than the *remote* consequences. With the ability to anticipate the future and to feel in imagination what the remote consequences will be, types of behavior that are immediately unpleasant may be undergone willingly for the sake of what the future will bring. In the very highest types of conduct, the individual is even able to read his own pleasure and his own pain very largely out of the problem, and to base his acts upon the future good of others. In general, however, this level of conduct is relatively uncommon, although it is, naturally enough, an ideal to which society gives the most powerful sanctions because it involves a conscious and willing sacrifice of the individual for the social good.

The Relative Efficiency of Pleasant and Unpleasant Consequences. — The school, however, deals primarily with the immature mind of childhood and here the immediate consequences rather than the remote consequences are the determining factors in conduct. The question at once arises, Are pleasant consequences (rewards) more effective in modifying conduct than unpleasant consequences (penalties)? From the point of view of psychological theory, there can be little doubt of the answer to this question. The discipline of the

" unpleasant " or the " disagreeable " undoubtedly teaches its lessons with greater certainty and celerity than the discipline of the " pleasant " or the " agreeable." This has been fairly well demonstrated in the experimental study of animal psychology. It has been found, for example, that when animals are being taught certain tricks, the infliction of a slight pain for every failure to make the right movement is more effective than depending simply on giving a reward (in the form, perhaps, of a lump of sugar) for every success. Obviously, the most effective procedure employs *both* the pleasant and the unpleasant consequence. The reason for the greater efficiency of the unpleasant, if only one is used, however, reveals some rather important lessons for education. Yerkes says that the effectiveness of the pleasant depends upon the happy coöperation of a number of conditions that are not always under the control of the trainer. If, for example, one depends upon the attractiveness of a food reward in training an animal, the efficiency of the reward will depend upon whether the animal is hungry. The unpleasant consequence, however, operates with much greater certainty and is amenable to a much finer measure of control by the trainer.[1]

That a similar condition operates in human education is obvious. The virtues of a reward are realized only when the individual very greatly desires the reward, and this desire varies with different individuals and at different times with the same individual. Penalties,

[1] Cf. R. M. Yerkes, *The Dancing Mouse*, New York, 1907, pp. 98 f.

however, operate with much greater constancy and can be applied with approximately the same unpleasant results to all individuals, — although that penalties vary somewhat in their potency from individual to individual and from time to time is clear enough.

The Discipline of the Disagreeable in Education.— In solving the problem of school discipline, direct reliance must be placed upon penalties and indirect reliance upon rewards. This somewhat cryptic sentence really involves an educational principle of large importance. *It is always bad policy in school discipline to bribe children to be good through offering direct and unequivocal rewards for good behavior.* The "rewards of virtue" must come in school, as in life, through indirect channels. Society places only one reward on mere "goodness" (that is, on negative morality or mere avoidance of evil) and that reward is freedom from penalties for being bad! Positive virtue — direct and self-sacrificing effort for the social welfare — may bring large rewards in adult life and should certainly bring a reward of some sort in school. But the responsibility for merely avoiding evil should rest upon the individual, and the only effective method of insuring this end is to penalize evil.

For individual and group infractions of the necessary rules and restrictions of the school, therefore, penalties of one sort or another must be exacted. Sometimes the penalty will itself attach to the misdeed, — as when, for example, the silent disapproval of the group follows the misdeed. But in most instances (and particularly in

the "unruly" school which we have been discussing) the penalty must be imposed by the teacher.

Conditions that make Penalties Effective. — A penalty must usually fulfill two functions: (1) it must associate itself in the pupil's mind with the undesirable act, and so serve to deter him from a repetition of the act; and (2) it must deter others from similar misdeeds. The first of these conditions requires that the penalty have an effective "sting," and that it be readily and unequivocally associable with the misdeed and so far as possible *with nothing else*. That is, the association of the "sting" of the penalty with acts that are desirable or with school work in general is obviously to be avoided. The conditions under which a penalty will act as a deterrent to others are much more complicated, — so complicated, indeed, that it is impossible to lay down any general principles that will govern each particular case. A great deal, if not everything, depends upon the *social prejudice* that has grown up against the penalty.

But this very "social prejudice" which makes certain penalties very effective as deterrents, operates as well to preclude their employment. In the following chapter we shall trace the evolution of punishment, and point out how and why certain penalties have come to be so repugnant as to be completely abandoned by civilized society.

Questions and Exercises

1. In your own experience, has the fear of painful consequences or the anticipation of pleasurable consequences

been the more effective incentive for leaving undone the things that you wished to do and for doing the tasks that you did not wish to do? Have you noticed in any case an alternation between the fear of the unpleasant and the hope of the pleasant? (Take, for example, working on an unattractive lesson: is the fear of failing in class or the hope of making a good record or a high "mark" the more effective stimulus?) Cite other cases.

2. Under what conditions will the hope of reward prove an effective incentive? Do you agree with the statement that unpleasant consequences operate with more certainty than pleasant consequences? Can you think of additional reasons why the unpleasant may be the more effective?

3. What is the danger of inflicting the same kind of punishment for misconduct on the one hand and for the failure of the pupil to "get his lessons" on the other hand? (For example, in the old-time school, pupils were whipped indiscriminately for mischief and for unwillingness or inability to learn quickly and effectively.)

4. If a punishment to be fully effective must associate itself in the pupil's mind with the misdeed, how would you justify delayed punishments? (Delay that is not too protracted may certainly be justified under some conditions.)

5. Do you agree that regular school tasks should not be employed as penalties for misconduct? If you agree with this as a general principle, can you justify exceptions, and if so under what conditions?

CHAPTER XI

Corporal Punishment and the Reaction against it

In the cases cited in the preceding chapter occasional reference was made to the infliction of corporal punishment. Where direct, coercive measures are adopted, the employment of physical coercion is naturally first suggested. As a matter of fact, however, the use of actual physical force in American schools is becoming less and less frequent, and the time is perhaps not far in the future when it will be very rare. At the same time, it is hardly likely that a means of discipline which has been so well-nigh universal in the past, and which has had the sanction of human experience from time immemorial, will ever entirely lose its place. Like so many of the other forces that have operated in the evolution of the social structure, physical coercion will come to "function" *more and more in a "symbolic" rather than in an "actual" way.* That is to say, the *possibility* of physical coercion or of physical punishment will continue to be a force in life. Just as the state *can* compel the individual to live in accordance with certain restrictions, so the school *can* compel the pupil; but just as the state when it has attained a stable and permanent form may safely depend

upon the *possibility* of coercion to work the desired result, so the school, when the proper degree of stability in its organization has been obtained, may rest fairly secure in the same vicarious force. It is in new communities where law and order are struggling with anti-social forces that the law must be administered with severity and rigor. And in the school that is decadent or rebellious, or in the school that is not taken seriously by the community or by the pupils, a similar necessity exists.

Why Actual Physical Coercion is Disappearing. —The measure in which the possibility of coercion does away with the fact of coercion is clearly revealed in some of the larger city school systems in which corporal punishment is practically unknown. Here the very magnitude of the school organization, its visible expression in massive buildings and costly equipment, the vast army of pupils and teachers that its buildings house, all combine to give an impression of power and strength which even a child can feel. That it is altogether wholesome for one to be conscious of one's own impotence in the face of overwhelming odds may perhaps be denied by the radical individualist; but there can be no doubt that effective government depends largely upon this factor; and if the "overwhelming odds" represent clearly and unequivocally the collective will of the people, there can be little doubt that the feeling of impotence is salutary and wholesome. Without it the social fabric would quickly crumble.

A second reason why the necessity for actual physical coercion is disappearing is to be found in the fact that confirmed recalcitrants — the troublesome incorrigibles — are being turned over to special agencies for segregation, treatment, and, if possible, reform. This tends to relieve the school of those abnormal individuals who in the interests of the majority, would otherwise be the constant objects of coercive measures. It is, however, only in the larger cities that the special schools and institutions for incorrigibles have been established; and while state institutions will receive very unruly boys and girls from smaller communities upon commitment through a process of law, they cannot, of course, serve so effectively to eliminate the necessity for coercive measures in the smaller schools. Generally speaking, it is in the schools of the smaller communities that the disciplinary problem still looms large, — not only because these communities cannot provide special schools for incorrigibles, but also because the younger and more inexperienced teachers are more numerous here, and because supervision is less effective.

A third factor influencing the decline of physical coercion in American schools has been the gradual but now almost complete feminization of the teaching force in the elementary schools.

The fundamental reason for the decline of physical correction and compulsion in education, however, must be sought in the changing attitude of the public toward this particular form of discipline. This change has been

going on gradually for a long period, accompanying somewhat tardily the general reaction against corporal punishment in civil and military government.

The Reaction against Corporal Punishment. — Flogging was, until within a hundred years, a universal method of correction, not only in dealing with children, but also in dealing with adult offenders. Indeed, the supposed virtues of the rod were not only held in high repute in connection with moral discipline, but were sometimes extolled as effective agencies in the treatment of disease.[1] Castigation and flagellation have also played an important part in religious discipline. Ritualistic flagellation existed among the Jews; with the Christians, the rod was early used as a means of correction; and, with the development of monasticism, voluntary flogging came to be a favorite means of penance. The sect of the Flagellants originated in Italy in the thirteenth century and flourished for nearly two hundred years, the fervor for self-inflicted punishment apparently growing with the persecution to which the adherents were at first subjected;[2] the sect declined in the fifteenth

[1] In Constable's *Accounts of Great Staughton, Hunts*, the following entry is found: "1690-1, Pd. Thomas Hawkins for whipping two people yt had smallpox — 8 d." (Cited in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, art. "Whipping.") Galen prescribed flagellation for lean people who desired more adipose tissue. Seneca reports that certain fevers were successfully dispelled by blows, and Octavius Augustus is said to have been cured of rheumatism by a liberal application of the rod! (See the curious compilation by W. M. Cooper, *A History of the Rod in All Countries*, London, ca. 1867.)

[2] According to the chronicle of Albert of Strassburg, two hundred of these flagellants came from Schwaben to Spira, under one principal and

century, but many of the peculiar practices were continued, especially among the Jansenists, and one may indeed find to-day sporadic instances of flagellation in the monastic orders.

Flogging as a punishment imposed for the infraction of the civil law was a common practice in ancient Egypt, and among the oriental nations of antiquity. It held a prominent place in the Roman code, and passed from Rome to the nations of medieval Europe. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was a common sentence for minor offenses, the right of a court to impose this punishment being recognized in England and America as a tenet of common law. With the development of humanitarian ideals, however, and under the influence of a changing conception of the function of punishment, the practice came to be gradually restricted.

In 1820, the flogging of women offenders (which had been a common practice in preceding centuries) was entirely abolished in England, and during the decades immediately

two subordinate rulers, whose commands they implicitly obeyed. "They were met by crowds of people. Placing themselves within a circle on the ground, they stripped, leaving on their bodies only a breech-cloth. They then walked with arms outstretched like a cross round and round the circle for a time, finally prostrating themselves on the ground. They soon after rose, each striking his neighbor with a scourge, armed with knots and four iron points, regulating their blows by the singing of psalms. At a certain signal the discipline ceased, and they threw themselves first on their knees, then flat on the ground, groaning and sobbing. On rising the leader gave them a short address, exhorting them to implore the mercy of God upon their benefactors and enemies. . . . This was followed by another prostration, and then another discipline. . . ." (Cited by Cooper, *op. cit.*, pp. 104 f.)

following, many of the other abuses which had grown up under the old practice were corrected. In England to-day, there are offenses that may be punished by flogging, but the penalty is inflicted in relatively few cases. In the United States, corporal punishment is not recognized by the Federal law,[1] although in at least two states it is still permissible to inflict it for certain offenses, — notably wife beating.

During the past century, also, the practice of inflicting corporal punishment has been almost entirely abandoned as a means of military and naval discipline, — although here, as in the case of corporal punishment in the school and the home, the reform has only tardily followed the abolition of the rod as a civil penalty.[2] In the merchant marine, corporal punishment declined with other cruel practices during the latter quarter of the nineteenth century.

The Decline of Corporal Punishment in the School. — From the earliest days of formal education until within a very few decades corporal punishment has had an important place in schools of all types and grades, although from very early times, also, there have been vigorous

[1] But the Eighth Amendment of the Federal constitution, which forbids the employment of "cruel and unusual punishments," has been held not to apply to corporal punishment as the term is commonly understood. (Bishop, *American Criminal Law*, 8th ed., Sect. 947.)

[2] The progress of the movement against corporal punishment is perhaps most clearly seen in the statistics presented by Cooper (*op. cit.*, p. 355) referring to the decreasing proportion of flogging sentences imposed by courts martial in the British army. From 1811 to 1823, one half of all of the sentences specified corporal punishment; from 1825 to 1828, this proportion was reduced to one in five; by 1832, it had reached one in six; in 1865, it had been reduced to one in fifty-four.

protests against its employment and innumerable expressions of skepticism as to its efficacy. Quintilian denounced it as degrading; Plutarch characterized it as a method of "incitement far more suitable to slaves than to the free, on whom [it] can produce no other effect than to induce torpor of mind and disgust for exertion"; Ascham was inspired by the barbarous methods of school punishment current in his time to write *The Scholemaster* (published after his death in 1568); Locke held that severe punishment does but little good and often very great harm in education, and, with Comenius, believed corporal punishment valueless as an incentive to intellectual effort, — although, like Comenius also, he reserved a place for it as a moral corrective; Rousseau and Herbert Spencer would leave punishment very largely to the "discipline of natural consequences."

Except in sporadic instances (of which the Jesuit schools are a notable example), these temperate and humane ideals of discipline, however, had but little effect upon actual school practice until their power was intensified and augmented by the general humanitarian movement of the nineteenth century and the development of a new conception of the function of punishment in the whole scheme of life. So complete has been the transformation, that the practices not uncommon in American schools even fifty years ago are scarcely believable to those who have grown up under the new order. The rod was inseparably connected with "learning"; often

it was applied very much as parents sometimes administer medicine to their children, not as a corrective for present conditions, but as a measure of precaution.[1] Certainly no sharp line was drawn between the use of corporal punishment as a stimulus to mental effort and its employment as a punishment for offenses against order; it was used indiscriminately for both purposes.

The Older Severity sanctioned by the Older Ideals. — It is not to be inferred, however, that the teachers of all the centuries were entirely heartless and cruel. The treatment of children both in the home and at school was severe as measured by our present standards, but it should be remembered that it was part and parcel of the spirit of the times. It was not only sanctioned but demanded by society; and the teacher who could not meet this demand could not be secure in his employment. Nor, under these conditions, could sporadic and excep-

[1] Speaking of a time much earlier — the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries — Cooper says (*op. cit.*, p. 427): "In those days it would appear that boys were flogged, not for any offense, or omission, or unwillingness, or incapacity to learn, but upon the abstract theory that they ought to be flogged. Erasmus bears witness that this was the principle upon which he was flogged. He was a favorite with his master, who had good hopes of his disposition and abilities, but flogged him to see how he could bear the pain, the result being that the rod nearly spoiled the child; his health and spirit were broken by it, and he began to dislike his studies." The famous Colet, dean of St. Paul's, "although he delighted in children, and was a good man, thought no discipline could be too severe in his school; and whenever he dined there, one or two boys were served up to be flogged by way of dessert." The attitude toward flogging as an educative measure is nowhere more clearly seen in all its inconsistency than the practice of appointing "whipping boys" to take the punishments of young princes and noblemen!

tional leniency be permanently successful. When education through the birch was the universal rule, a type of education that dispensed entirely with this method would meet with a social disapproval that would render it ineffective. The pupils, thoroughly familiar with the current standards, would fail entirely to understand the situation, and their natural tendency would be to take immediate advantage of the leniency. The transformation of standards and ideals cannot be accomplished in a day.

The numerous biblical injunctions and precepts regarding chastisement have naturally had a large influence in determining disciplinary practices among Jewish and Christian peoples. Cooper has compiled a number of these and stated them in words which, he says, represent literal equivalents of the Hebrew original:

"The fool despises the chastisement of his father, but he who receives stripes will be wise: chastise thy son while there is hope, but let not thy soul be moved to kill him: let one beat the profane, so will the fool become wise; let one punish one of understanding, so will he become wise. Stripes for the profane, and a rod for the fool's back: the young man's strength is his praise; one must retain the wicked with hard punishment, and with sore stripes which one may feel; folly dwells in the heart of the child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him. Open chastisement is better than secret love: the chastisements of a friend are well meant, but the kisses of a sycophant are dainty; rods and punishments give wisdom, but a boy given up to himself shames his mother: chastise thy son so will he delight thee, and will do good to thy soul; the whip makes

stripes, but an evil tongue breaks bones and all: he who loves his child holds it continually under the rod, that he may thereafter experience joy in him; he who restrains his child will delight himself in him, and cannot be ashamed among his friends; he is weak toward his child who mourns his stripes and is terrified when he shakes; bow his neck while he is yet young, make blue his back while he is yet little, that he may not become stiff-necked and disobedient to thee. Cease not to chastise thy boy, for though thou strikest him with the rod thou wilt not kill him; thou belatest him with the Rod, but thou preservest his soul from hell."

The Development of Present-day Conceptions of the Function of Punishment. — Whether the punishment of children as an educative or formative agency should be identified with the punishment of adults for offenses against the social order may be an open question; but there is no doubt that the general movement that has resulted in so marked a change in the older conceptions of punishment in the legal and civic sense has also been the most important factor in transforming the ideals of school discipline. This transformation has been repeatedly referred to in the preceding sections. It now remains to trace specifically the stages through which it has been brought about.

The idea of punishment has its roots in basic and fundamental instincts. To visit upon an aggressor retaliation for real or supposed wrongs is the primitive mode of punishment; it involves the fighting instinct and the emotion of anger, — recognized forms of innate or "un-

learned " behavior.[1] There is here no necessary connection between the nature and degree of the offense and the nature and degree of the vengeance. Torture and death may be the penalty for the slightest offenses, or for imagined offenses, or for the mere presence of a victim at a time when the instinctive forces demand an adequate expression. This primitive form from which modern ideas of punishment have been slowly evolved is known as *vindictive* or *retributive punishment*. Adapted as it is, although crudely and inequitably, to individual survival, it nevertheless takes on, in primitive groups, a social form, and its social expression is still in evidence in the punishments meted out by mob law and sometimes so loudly clamored for by a public opinion that has been wrought up to a high pitch of collective anger.

It is probable that the first step away from this primitive conception of punishment was taken when the first feeble glimmerings of the ideal of justice made their appearance. Unrestrained vengeance came to be modified by the idea of *proportionate punishment*, — a stage of development well represented by the injunction, " An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

With the development of stable societies, the ideal of

[1] "This instinct [of pugnacity] . . . ranks with fear as regards the great strength of its impulse and the high intensity of the emotion it generates. . . . The condition of its excitement is . . . any opposition to the free exercise of any impulse, any obstruction to the activity to which the creature is impelled by any one of the other instincts. And its impulse is to break down any such obstruction, and to destroy whatever offers this opposition." — W. McDougall, *Social Psychology*, Boston, 1910, p. 59.

justice becomes more clearly dominant. The social dangers of individual retaliation are recognized. Henceforth crimes are recognized as "against the state," and the exaction of "justice" by the individual becomes likewise a crime against the state. The essential injustice of permitting the injured party to dictate the punishment is clearly seen. At this point, also, the ideal of justice which has heretofore been satisfied with proportionate justice becomes strengthened and extended to include the idea of *protective punishment*, which expresses itself naturally as *intimidatory* punishment. The collective judgment of the social group recognizes that wrongdoing must be prevented for the welfare of all. The primitive impulses that have hitherto applied chiefly to individual survival come to have a wider reference. The group, as it were, comes into the stage of self-consciousness: it, too, must survive because upon its survival depends the welfare of the component individuals.

It was this conception of punishment as a means of justice and of social survival that dominated the administration of civil law until comparatively recent times. While individuals certainly recognized the inadequacy of the conception, the institutions of society, which are changed only very slowly and very gradually, reflected little else than the retributive and protective ideas. With the great social upheavals of the eighteenth century, however, the older conception felt the influence of modifying agencies. The humanitarian movement

gained momentum. Under the stimulating influence of Rousseau and other writers with exceptional ability to make a wide popular appeal, the ideas of equality and of the essential brotherhood of man came to have a wide currency. Prejudices were broken down, and with the French Revolution the institutions which crystallized them began to crumble. The ideas of civil punishment were not the first to feel the influence of these forces of change and transformation, for the institutions of justice must, of necessity, be ultraconservative; but, with this spirit of change rife on every side, it was inevitable that they, too, should sooner or later come under its sway.

The next stage in the evolution of punishment marked a most important advance. It recognized the fundamental need of making the *reform* of the criminal the measure of a punishment's efficiency. Hitherto the culprit had been an outcast, practically cut off from human help and human sympathy. From this time on, he became in ever-increasing measure, an object of social solicitude. To return him to society rehabilitated and made anew became the ideal of the *reformatory* theory of punishment.

Among the men whose efforts were especially significant in initiating this reformatory principle were Cesare Beccaria (1735–1794), an Italian publicist, and the author of several treatises dealing with the reform of criminal law; Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), the English philosopher and jurist, whose efforts to reconcile law and morality were vital factors in replacing the retributive and tempering the protective

theories of punishment; and John Howard (1726–1790), whose efforts toward the reform of prisons and workhouses have made his name immortal.

The final stage in the evolution of punishment is represented by the movement which has as its ideal eliminating the need of punishment by *preventing* crime. The ideal is, of course, utopian, and yet many steps may be taken to reduce the amount of crime and so do away in a measure with the necessity of punishment. These steps are illustrated by the movement for vocational education, the playground movement, the agitation against child labor, the efforts to reconcile capital and labor and to pass minimum-wage laws, and finally the propaganda for preventing the breeding of defective and delinquent types. In general these various movements aim either to remedy the economic conditions of life, to provide for the wholesome employment of leisure, or to insure, through eugenic practices, an elimination of degenerate "stock."

New Prejudices have replaced the Old. – Under the influence of the humanitarian ideal, and of its offspring, the "reformatory" conception of punishment, social and collective prejudices of a very profound type have gradually developed until to-day they possess a strength that must be reckoned with by every policy of punishment, whether in adult civil life or in school life. Forms of corrective treatment that were once taken for granted now arouse abhorrence and disgust. One of the earliest restrictions of corporal punishment as a civil penalty

prohibited the flogging of women offenders, and one of the earliest effective reactions against corporal punishment in the schools was to interdict the whipping of girls. In both cases, this was the effective expression of a new prejudice, — an extension of the traditional respect for womanhood which made it inconsistent with the public sense of decency to subject girls and women to bodily chastisement no matter how great the offense for which the punishment was inflicted. Once having gained momentum, the prejudice quickly extended to males. Corporal punishment can be most effectively applied only when certain parts of the body are exposed, and the notion that self-respect in this very personal sense could not in justice be sacrificed to the necessities of punishment has gradually eliminated the chastisement of adolescents in schools. Corporal punishment is now almost entirely limited to preadolescent children both in the school and in the home, and it is possible that the sense of indelicacy which now effectually prevents the use of the rod with girls, and with boys who have reached the age of sexual self-consciousness, may be extended downward until it includes the youngest children; but there are obvious reasons why this development, if it ever takes place, will come very slowly.

It should be added that another factor has operated to limit corporal punishment. There can be no doubt that there are certain perverted impulses which find pleasurable gratification in inflicting pain. Indeed, the alienist recognizes this form of abnormality, and has

given it a name which need not be repeated here. Whether this impulse is inherited or whether it is acquired through practicing chastisement, is debatable, but it is probably true that one who wreaks one's temper habitually in the infliction of pain is likely to develop this perverted taste. Suffice it to say that, in the past, men and women who have craved this gratification have deliberately sought the kind of work that permitted its enjoyment, and have not infrequently found places in schools where the severe treatment of boys and girls was sanctioned. Most of the scandals that occasionally find their way into the newspapers, involving reports of the most heartless and cruel treatment of children, would doubtless reveal upon investigation the existence of this perverted impulse.

Difficulties involved in Reconciling the Different Functions of Punishment. — It is characteristic of social evolution that rapid advances due to the development of new ideals are followed by apparently retrogressive movements; at one point or another the new theories fail to work in actual practice, and a readjustment is necessary. This is clearly seen in the reaction that followed the French Revolution. The excesses and other obvious symptoms of a lack of adjustment made inevitable a temporary movement toward the older order, — a movement that found expression throughout the territory that had been influenced by the eighteenth-century upheavals. The reaction itself was extreme and gave rise to a series of counterreactions, notably the revolu-

tions of 1832, 1848, and 1870, alternating with temporary triumph of the conservative forces. This general mode of "zigzag" progress, most clearly seen in the history of France, may be taken as characteristic of social evolution, and it has a striking analogy in the uneven progress of mental development in the individual.[1]

The development of the modern conception of punishment has followed a similarly zigzag course, although the actual retrogressive movements are not so clearly in evidence because actual procedure in the administration of justice is, as we have pointed out, ultraconservative, and has barely time to "catch up" with theory before a dominant doctrine has lost the extreme and radical features which a new and untried theory almost always represents. It is true, however, that the ideal of reform has suggested many changes in procedure which have had to be modified and limited because the time was not yet ripe for them. Thus the "parole" system which releases convicted lawbreakers and permits them to follow their regular employment under the supervision of officers of the court was successfully applied at the outset, but has in some cases led to an unfortunate attitude toward, if not to a pronounced disrespect for, the law.[2]

[1] In the "practice curve," for example. See below, ch. xiv.

[2] "In his recent report as director of the Gatzert Foundation, Dr. Stevenson Smith points out that leniency toward criminals is most successful when it is first practiced, and that as probation becomes more general it is less effective. The value of probation depends entirely

Leniency and Disrespect for Law. — These reactionary movements are often really sincere attempts toward the correction of existing evils rather than mere expressions of a conversatism that hates change. New ideas fail to work, and experimenting with them creates conditions that demand remedy. Thus the growth of the ideals of reformatory as opposed to merely protective punishment and the doing away with the severer modes of treating lapses from law and order are probably in some measure responsible for the increase in lawlessness and in serious crime which constitutes one of the grave problems of modern civilization, especially in the countries where these ideals have found the widest expression, — namely, France and the United States.

From 1850 to 1890, the proportion of criminals in the population of the United States increased 445 per cent; the population increased only 170 per cent in the same period. A more rigid enforcement of the law would explain this increase were it confined to the sections that have during this period passed from the cruder life of the frontier where lawlessness is perhaps inevitable to the stage of stable civil government. As a matter of fact, however, the increase was general throughout the country. From 1890 to 1904 the number of juvenile offenders increased approximately one fifth more rapidly than the population increased, and in some states

upon the mental attitude of the probationer. We need much more careful study of individual cases with reference to the mental habits previous to the crime and the attitude of the culprit toward his crime and toward society after his conviction, in order to secure the best results from the probation system." (Editorial in *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. iii, 1913, p. 409.)

the proportion was even doubled during these fourteen years. Juvenile delinquency has been admittedly increasing in the larger cities during the last twenty years. The statistics revealing the large proportional increase in homicides have been frequently quoted, and may probably be safely taken as symptomatic of a general increase in serious crime. The figures in the mortality tables of the Federal census giving the proportion of deaths from homicide in the registration area are difficult to interpret because of the gradual extension of this area from year to year.[1] Most perplexing of all of the statistics, however, are those that reveal the marked increase of homicides in the larger cities. Here the proportion rose from 91 murders in the million of population in 1880 to 117 in 1890 and nearly 150 in 1910.[2]

Leniency in School Government and the Increase in Crime. — In how far the transformed methods of discipline in American schools have had an influence upon the attitude of the present younger generation toward law and toward the rights of others, it is impossible to say.

[1] According to the census reports, there were in the "registration area" 28 murders to the million of population in 1904, 51 in 1906, 67 in 1908, and 59 in 1909. In the rural districts of the registration area the proportions were as follows: 6 to the million in 1904, 12 in 1905, 33 in 1906, 41 in 1907, and 45 in 1908. In certain selected cities of the registration area, the homicides numbered 55 to the million in 1904, 99 to the million in 1906, and 143 to the million in 1908. As the registration area is extended, it comes gradually to include those portions of the country where statistics of mortality have not heretofore been carefully recorded; this probably means that these sections are also those in which lawlessness is most frequent; hence the rapid increase noted. At the same time, there is abundant evidence that there has been actual increase in the proportion of homicides during this period.

[2] The significance of our national homicide record cannot be thoroughly appreciated until we contrast our record with that of other

It is true that the second generation of the immigrant population (coming chiefly from northern Europe) reveals a higher proportion of criminality than the first generation; that is, the generation that has passed through our public schools is on the whole less law-abiding than were the immigrants themselves; and while this may be due to other factors, the responsibility of the school for failing to inculcate effective ideals of respect for law can hardly be evaded. It has been during this period that disciplinary measures have been most radically transformed, and this transformation has come

civilized countries. The following table is based on data taken from the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed., Art. "Temperance") with the exception of the items for the United States, New Zealand, and Canada:

Country	Number of persons in the million of total population *tried* for murder annually
Italy	154
Spain	119
Austria	40
Ireland	33
Belgium	30
France	27
Scotland	21
Germany	16
England	16
Holland	11
New Zealand	6
Canada	5 (*convictions*)
United States	30 (*commitments*)

When it is remembered that only a small proportion of the total number brought to trial for murder in the United States are convicted and committed, the unfortunate showing made by this country is all the more striking. The present (1914) homicide rate for the United States as a whole has been placed by competent authorities at 95 in the million annually.

first in those sections receiving large proportions of the immigrant tide, — that is, in large cities.

In New York City, for example, corporal punishment has been forbidden since 1878 by ruling of the Board of Education. The difficulties which are experienced in maintaining a reasonable measure of obedience from the pupils in this system are recounted by Professor McMurry, a member of the School Inquiry Commission which, under the chairmanship of Professor Paul Hanus, made a survey of the New York schools in 1911–1912:

"Saying nothing of the fact that to many pupils punishments more cruel than corporal punishment are applied, and that the by-law forbidding corporal punishment is often ignored, the great fact is that many class-room teachers are at their wits' end every day to discover how to give instruction while certain pupils constantly cause disorder. A large proportion of their time and energy is expended merely trying to get on with such pupils, until ill health results from worry and exhaustion.

"Although any educational system that enforces compulsory attendance is under obligations to protect each pupil, not only from physical but also from moral contagion, yet it is a fact that the great majority are influenced harmfully, through no fault of their own, by observing examples of disobedience.

"Finally the troublesome pupils themselves, conscious of the powerlessness of their teachers, become confirmed in lawless habits in the very place that is intended to teach them to observe the rights of others; and these lawless habits, carried into after life, lead directly to the lawless gangs and rowdyism so common to-day." [1]

[1] F. M. McMurry, *Elementary School Standards*, Yonkers, N.Y., 1913, p. 74.

Upon the basis of these facts, the Commission recommended that the by-law prohibiting corporal punishment be rescinded, and that the right to inflict corporal punishment be delegated to the principals of the various schools, and to the teachers of special classes for unruly children when such classes are organized. The recommendation, however, contemplated the exercise of this authority under very definite restrictions: (1) medical examination of pupils prior to the infliction of corporal punishment; (2) the written consent of the parent or guardian where it is possible to secure this; (3) the presence of an adult witness; (4) the preservation of careful records of the cause of punishment and methods used.

In answer to the question, Have the more lenient ideals and methods of school and home discipline operated to increase disrespect for law? it is safe to say that they have had some influence, although it would be unjust to shoulder upon these methods a very large share of the responsibility. That they have been contributing factors it is reasonable to infer.[1] And the cause

[1] That laxity in school discipline may give rise to an increase in crime is too ready an inference to be employed without great caution. One with ultraconservative tendencies is especially likely to infer causal connections of this sort without any evidence that such connections exist. In every generation, the conservative will proclaim that disaster is certain to come from the "new" practices. An American schoolmaster writing in 1837 complains of the laxity in the schools of that period: "It is to this new-fashioned laxity of rule that we may in part attribute, I think, much of the insubordination [and riot, yea, even 'Lynch law,' which has crept into our schools and families, as well as pervaded like a pestilence over our states." *Annals of the American Institute of Instruction*, vol. viii, p. 80.

of whatever degenerating influence they have exerted must be sought, not in the fact that the humanitarian ideals are inherently weak and ineffective, but rather in the fact that they have been applied emotionally and not intelligently. Leniency has become weak sentimentalism. Mastery has given place all too often to fawning; "obedience" has been sought by petting and cajolery; sympathy has degenerated into a mawkish coquetry for the goodwill of the child. In short, from the extreme of rigor, school discipline has swung in many instances to the extreme of indulgence, — stimulated by a crude philosophy in which highly emotionalized shibboleths have been mistaken for fundamental principles. Soft-heartedness, which is a prime virtue, has been combined with soft-headedness, — and when this happens, disaster is inevitable.

Much more significant than appears on the surface is the statement in the report of the New York School Inquiry that "many punishments more cruel than corporal punishment have been applied, and that the law forbidding corporal punishment is often ignored." This is true, not only of New York City, but also of other communities in which a prejudice has grown up against corporal punishment. Where laws which both pupils and teachers know to be in force are openly evaded, there can be small hope that an effective respect for law will be engendered.

The Place of Corporal Punishment. — It would not be right to infer from apparent inefficiency of lenient ideals

and methods of discipline that the principle of corporal punishment should be reaffirmed as a tenet of school discipline. Far from it. As has been suggested, every new advance is likely to be followed by a reaction, which is due to the fact that the new ideal has overshot the mark of present practicability. On the whole, the doing away with the rod of correction has constituted a most wholesome reform in school practice in spite of some of the evils that have accompanied it. The problem is to recognize the evils not as a justification of a complete return to the older order, but as a stimulus to further effort in the direction of progress. Democracy and the rule of the people brought with it many abuses and shortcomings; the highly emotional radicals refused to recognize these evils; the highly emotional conservatives delighted to parade them as evidences of the inherent failure of the democratic principle, and as good and sufficient reasons for going back to the former condition. But the great mass of right-thinking and clear-thinking people quickly recognized, both that the new abuses must be abated and that this must be done without returning to the old order. The situation is precisely the same in connection with school discipline. There are many who will see in the new practices no dangers or defects; there are others who can find nothing but retrogression and decay, and who sigh heavily for the "good old times" when boys and girls were "made to behave." But the path of reason and of clear thinking is to recognize the evils and plan to correct them, while at the same time the un-

doubted virtues inherent in the new order are sedulously and jealously guarded. This is by far the most difficult way in which to meet the problem, *but it is the only effective way.*

Let us conclude, then, that the day of corporal punishment as an important agency in school discipline has passed never to return. And let us also conclude that its passing is not yet complete and cannot be complete until social customs and prejudices have been thoroughly adjusted to the new order and until effective methods of dealing with acute disciplinary difficulties have been discovered, standardized, and made effective by general recognition. The period through which we are passing is in every respect a transitional period. Here we must use old devices and agencies *if necessary* when the new methods and agencies fail, and *pending the discovery of something better.* It is the writer's opinion that the *right of corporal punishment should be reserved by the people to the teachers and officers of the people's schools.* Respect for law must be engendered, and those to whom the task is delegated must have requisite authority. But the authority should be safeguarded by careful restrictions; it should be exercised with extreme caution; and it should gradually come to operate entirely through vicarious channels — that is, it should be the *possibility* of such punishment, rather than its actual *infliction* that will fulfill the desired *regulative* function.

The Infliction of Corporal Punishment. — To the young teacher, advice regarding corporal punishment

should be replete with cautions. Wherever this penalty is forbidden by law or by board ruling, it is hardly necessary to say that it should in no case be applied, and any " laying on of hands " should be interpreted as coming under this injunction. Where public opinion is against the practice, it should have practically the same effect as a prescription. (It is said[1] that the recent decisions of the courts in cases where teachers have been brought to trial for inflicting corporal punishment have been almost exclusively against the teacher, — a state of affairs quite different from that which prevailed in the past when the teacher's contentions were almost invariably upheld by the courts. Where corporal punishment is " expected " by the community as a part of school discipline, — as it still is in some parts of the country, — it is well to get on without it just as long as one can do so and still retain one's authority. But where it is expected, it sometimes happens that to " whip " is the only avenue to the establishment of one's authority. In general, if corporal punishment is permitted, it is much better to make use of it temperately than to resort to expulsion; certainly, in such cases, one should not hesitate to use it if other measures are ineffective.

To the young teacher who has decided to use this measure, the following specific suggestions may be helpful:

1. Never administer punishment in anger.
2. If a whip is applied, use a light " switch " over the

[1] By A. E. Winship in an editorial in the *Journal of Education* (Boston).

backs of the legs or a light ruler on the palms of the hands. Do not strike the head, box the ears, or "shake" the offender.

3. If possible, have an adult witness.

4. Do not administer such punishment before other pupils.

5. Obtain the consent of the parent if possible beforehand. (To confer with parents beforehand will often preclude the necessity of punishment.)

6. Keep a record of the offense, the nature of the punishment, and the time and manner of its infliction.

It was said above that methods must be devised to do what physical coercion and corporal punishment have been supposed to do in the past. We have already referred to some of these methods, — insuring a coercive influence of the work itself and of the social group, — but some of the numerous specific devices that are employed in present-day day schools will undoubtedly be used at times by almost every teacher, and these deserve a chapter by themselves.

Questions and Exercises

1. Professor James Sully once said that children actually crave punishment after committing faults. Do you recall in your own childhood instances of this sort? Did punishment bring to you a feeling of relief?

2. Analyze your own attitude toward corporal punishment in childhood. Did it appeal to you as worse than other penalties? If it was applied, did the experience embitter you toward the one inflicting the punishment?

3. As a general rule, a punishment that is employed as a corrective for immoral or forbidden activities should not be employed as a stimulus to greater effort in the regular school work. Can you justify this rule?

4. An obvious reason why the teacher should not inflict punishment in anger or in a vindictive mood is that he will run the risk of physical injury to the pupil. Are there other reasons?

5. Add to the instances given in the text illustrating how ideals gradually become deeply seated prejudices. (For example, the humanitarian ideal has resulted in a prejudice against the infliction of humiliating punishments. Have similar consequences followed from the general acceptance of other ideals?)

6. Assuming that serious crime has increased in the United States more rapidly than the population has increased, to what causes would you attribute this increase? (The increase in wealth, and economic evils, have been blamed in this connection. Are there other possible factors?)

7. What steps might be taken by the public schools to check the apparent increase in disrespect for law and for the rights of others? What is the relation of school discipline to this problem?

8. What would be your judgment as to the possibility of eliminating corporal punishment entirely from education, both in the home and in the school?

9. Some authorities maintain that corporal punishment in school and home will tend to offset the "softening" influences of modern civilization. Discuss this theory.

10. Corporal punishment is forbidden in the public schools of France and of Japan. It is a common practice in the public schools of Germany, and not uncommon in England. Does any significance attach to these comparisons?

CHAPTER XII

Contemporary School Penalties

Some of the penalties that were common in the old-time school have been abandoned even more completely than corporal punishment. Perhaps the most notable of these are the practices of having pupils assume uncomfortable or even painful positions and expose themselves to ridicule (as by wearing a "dunce-cap"). With the reaction against corporal punishment (which, it will be remembered, was due in part to the fact that this punishment often involved a sacrifice of self-respect) has gone a reaction against other penalties in which the effective "sting" was public humiliation or shame. The disastrous effect of humiliation upon the individual was not a matter of concern so long as the function of punishment was conceived as either retaliation or mere protection. But when the ideas of reform and prevention came to the fore, the inconsistency of imposing humiliating penalties was quickly recognized. The penalties, then, that are to be consistent with the new order must not only be free from the necessity of touching or exposing any part of the body ordinarily covered, but they must also be devoid as far as possible of any tendency to shame or humiliate the individual publicly. It is true that some-

thing that would make for the efficiency of the punishment is hereby lost, but this is only another instance of paying a certain price for a greater gain.

Contemporary School Penalties. — The penalties imposed for occasional lapses from good conduct in the school in which an effective "fashion" of order and industry has been established need not delay us long, for the very fact that the attitude of the pupils is favorable to school work will mean that mere admonition from the teacher will be all that is necessary. Where this is unavailing, the preservation of the healthful school spirit will demand that immediate steps of a more heroic character must be adopted — for the principal or the teacher who has succeeded in building up a wholesome fashion of discipline must guard it most jealously. A suspension from the classroom or from the school for a brief period and a conference with the pupil's parents will usually bring the desired results in such cases. For the younger children, some of whom will be subject to occasional periods of irritability or fretfulness, — which may perhaps develop into spasms of "temper," — the effective treatment is similar to that employed in good homes under similar conditions, confinement in a room by themselves, where they will have an opportunity to calm down, and where they will be removed from an opportunity of disturbing or "infecting" others.

"*Solitary Treatment.*" — In at least one modern elementary school building a room is provided known as

the " think room " for the reception of these cases. It is small, but well lighted, — not the traditional " dark room " or closet, and it is furnished with a single chair. Troublesome pupils are sent to this room and required to remain there alone and without books or other means of diversion, with a suggestion that they " think over " the matter. A pupil thus incarcerated may yell lustily at the outset, but after the storm has subsided, and he has an opportunity to settle down into a reflective mood, the "cure " is usually quick and effective.

There is sound psychology back of this proposal, and it is possible that an application of the principle may serve even in critical cases to take the place of corporal punishment and of the penalties involving public shame and humiliation. The mental attitude induced by solitude is quite different from that involved in the social relationships, and one of the first steps in " reforming " a recalcitrant is to remove him from the companionship of those who will aid and abet him in his wrongdoing. A principal has reported the following case illustrative of the beneficial influence of this type of treatment:

Three eighth-grade boys were implicated in an act of vandalism, and their names were reported by the teacher who was in charge of the room. Each of these boys was taken separately and placed in a room by himself to think the matter over. After an hour of this treatment, the three were brought together and told to discuss with one another the offense and to devise adequate means of reparation. The plan worked successfully. The preliminary reflection had led them all to a real and effective repentance for their

misconduct, and the thoughts that were uppermost in their minds when they were thus unexpectedly brought together led at once to mutual confessions and promises which very adequately fulfilled the purpose of a penalty.

If facilities are available, this solitary treatment could, perhaps, be applied as an effective coercive measure in schools where the wrong fashions of order prevail; but the measure is not likely to be so uniformly successful here, for the entire pupil body is, by hypothesis, badly infected with virus of disorder and disobedience, and it is quite possible that the whole matter would be looked upon as indicative of the impotence of those in authority to deal effectively with the situation. However, in schools where other methods cannot well be applied, this proposal is worthy of trial.

Satiation as a Penalty. — Punishment through satiation, while sometimes most effective, is not often practicable in school. The results of forbidden and injurious activities will often be disastrous both to the individual and to the group before the point has been reached where disgust takes the place of enjoyment. "Nature" will usually compel a change of activity long before this point has been reached, consequently if the principle of satiation is to be successfully applied, the teacher must see to it that the forbidden activity is continued long after the pupil desires to discontinue it.

The following case illustrates the conditions under which the principle may be successfully applied — and it is clear

from the illustration that these conditions can only very infrequently be fulfilled.

A schoolroom was so constructed that the ceiling was supported by iron pillars surmounted by Corinthian capitals. Once when the teacher was absent from the room for a few moments, a boy yielded to an impulse which had often possessed him, — namely, to "shin" up one of the pillars. When the teacher returned, she found the boy perched at the summit with an arm and one leg over a corner of the capital. She remarked pleasantly upon his exploit and told him *to stay there*. It was fun for a few moments, but the unnatural posture quickly became uncomfortable, and it was not very long before the adventurous lad was longing for permission to come down. He saw, however, that the joke was turned, and said nothing. Finally, when the teacher saw that the discomfort had approached agony, she relented and told the boy to take his seat. The climbing of pillars, it is hardly necessary to say, was not repeated.

Rebukes and scoldings vary widely in their efficacy. In the well-ordered school, the slightest rebuke may, as we have suggested, be extremely effective. Where disorder prevails, admonitions and scoldings are likely to have little force. Their employment is also to be avoided because they serve all too well to advertise to the pupils the inefficiency of the teacher. The teacher is lost the moment his or her helplessness becomes apparent, and rebukes which lead to ineffective threats, and finally grow into a stormy passion of angry words, quickly produce an impossible situation. To "curb the tongue" in such situations is undoubtedly the best policy for the teacher to pursue.

"The great value of scolding is in its immediate result, like scratching a sore. It is saying what ought to be said in a way that ought not to be used. It is the angry setting forth of truth. It is egotistical. The scolder is thinking of himself, his wasted time, and pains, his offended dignity, his wounded vanity. It grows on him. The manner begins to count more than the matter. The listener ignores the what and resents the how. The scolder vitiates the atmosphere and poisons his own disposition. Nothing ages one sooner than scolding. The cure is simple. Count ten before scolding, then make two pleasant noises with the voice afterwards." [1]

Keeping after school is probably the most common method of punishment now used in American schools. It has its advantages, especially if it is made to represent the principle of *solitary treatment* mentioned above. One of the best teachers of our acquaintance makes retention after school practically her sole recourse in discipline. Sometimes, although not frequently, she remains with a rebellious pupil for two hours, — but he is usually conquered before that time. By relentlessly carrying out the penalty, whenever its employment is necessary, she has made it a powerful deterrent. The practice suffers, however, from two defects: first, it keeps the teacher from getting the exercise and diversion in the open air that every teacher should try to take between four and six; and secondly, it is likely to interfere with the janitor's work. On the whole, however, it

[1] F. M. Braselman, in the Washington Irving High School *Writs of Assistance*, New York, 1914, p. 225.

represents a mode of punishment that may be made to fulfill very effectively the conditions laid down earlier in the discussion: it does not necessarily involve public shame and humiliation, it is not "corporal" punishment, and, with the normal pupil, it usually has an effective "sting." There would seem to be some injustice involved in the case of pupils who have regular tasks and duties outside of school after school hours, — particularly, boys in towns and cities who carry papers, and it is possible that courts would rule that the authority of the teacher ends with the end of the school day. Conditions that are unjust must, in any case, be avoided.

"*Keeping in*" *at recess* is also a common penalty, but it is the writer's belief that this is bad practice. The room needs airing, the teacher will very likely have supervisory duties on the playground, and the penalty is usually so slight as to be quite ineffective.

Demerit marks, successive accumulations of which will lead to the infliction of other penalties varying in intensity have been employed with good results in some schools. Their use is especially recommended by J. S. Taylor, a district superintendent in New York City, in a book[1] which evidently grew out of the difficulties of maintaining order in a system where corporal punishment is forbidden.

The plan proposes keeping a book in which merits and demerits are carefully recorded. "A space is made for each day because a boy often wants to know when he received his

[1] J. S. Taylor, *Class Management*, New York, 1903, pp. 51 f.

marks. It is important for pupils to believe that the book is absolutely correct. It should be kept in ink so that there will be no temptation to erase the marks. The pupil who keeps the book must have the confidence of the class, and just as soon as he loses that he should be discharged.

"It is probably better to have two monitors [monitorial appointments, by the way, play an important part in Dr. Taylor's entire scheme of discipline and management], one for the debits and one for the credits. These monitors sit near the teacher and always put the record into the teacher's desk before the class is dismissed."

The debits and credits are then transferred to the general "account" of each pupil, and for the following week the favors and privileges are given or withheld on the basis of this record. Dr. Taylor maintains that this leaves no chance of biased judgment and that the device serves admirably to impress upon the pupil's mind the fact that he alone earns or sacrifices the rewards by his own behavior. As a suggestion of the way in which the system operates in administering discipline, the following directions for the guidance of the young teacher are quoted:

"(*a*) A glance in the direction of the offender.

"(*b*) A quiet summoning to the desk by beckoning, and a kind but firm rejoinder that his conduct is objectionable.

"(*c*) A second summoning and one demerit.

"(*d*) Two demerits.

"(*e*) A reprimand and five demerits.

"(*f*) Tell the pupil to change his seat temporarily and sit by his teacher's desk, informing him quietly that, inasmuch as it is necessary to watch him, you want to make it as convenient for yourself as possible; this and five demerits more.

"(*g*) Refuse to allow him to go on with the lesson; let him sit with his arms folded for five or ten minutes, then let him write a careful letter on the propriety of obeying one's

teacher. If this is not properly done, charge up a lesson against him and ask him to bring it next morning. More demerits."

Reduced to cold print, and viewed in the light of fundamental principles (and of what we know of child nature), this elaborate system of merits and demerits seems to be about the last word in hopeless inefficiency, — although it would doubtless work well enough in some instances. Its defects (from the point of view of theory) will serve to illustrate the general defects of a demerit system in discipline: (1) It imposes a laborious task of bookkeeping upon the teacher; (2) it fails to provide an immediate and unequivocal "sting" for offenses and lapses, and consequently fails of the chief function of the penalty, which is to associate with the offense a deterring feeling of unpleasantness; and (3) it makes for delay in the administration of justice. It would work effectively only under the condition that the demerits themselves came to be endowed with the essential "sting" and this would be possible only by providing, for an accumulation of demerits, actual punishments which would be feared much more keenly than those which Dr. Taylor proposes (chiefly loss of monitorial positions). The "advice" which we have quoted also breaks a cardinal rule of school management by making punishments out of legitimate school tasks ("Charge up a lesson against him and ask him to bring it in next morning"). We should also criticize the practice of having pupils sit by the teacher, — first, because it is usually

totally ineffective and not infrequently, indeed, a source of still greater disturbance and loss of authority; and, secondly, because, if it is effective, its efficiency depends upon the feeling of public shame and humilation which to our mind is just as abhorrent as corporal punishment.

The *withdrawal of privileges* is another means of punishment that has been commonly employed. Dr. Taylor, indeed, bases his system of demerits largely upon this factor. If a monitorial position is ardently desired by the troublesome pupil, he may be impelled to earn the appointment by good behavior. If it is not desired, then the "bribe" will fail of its desired effect. The granting of a half holiday to meritorious pupils, or the privilege of early dismissal, is sometimes effective. In the New York system, for example, "good" pupils may be dismissed early on Fridays. We do not protest against these devices because they will not "work," but because they are, in essence, "bribes," and we believe that any method of school discipline which is based upon this policy is charged with dynamite. The policy is likewise to be condemned because, in effect, it makes school attendance during regular school hours a punishment.

Conferring with parents will often prove a most successful means of solving disciplinary difficulties, and its efficacy should be tested by teachers much more frequently than is commonly the practice. The chief dangers to be avoided here are that the pupil himself may gain the idea that the teacher cannot "manage"

him, and that a parent may be encouraged to deny the right of the teacher to administer necessary punishment. The essential relationship of the teacher as *in loco parentis* should never be surrendered.

Suspension. — This is the "natural" punishment for school offenses, — a loss of "privilege" which ought to have an effective "sting." The difficulty lies in the fact that it does not always possess this virtue. In handling a critical situation, it is often necessary for the welfare of the majority to send pupils from school and to keep them from school until reasonable obedience, order, and industry are assured. Where the compulsory attendance laws are well enforced, the pupil of school age will either have to remain in school or be committed to a reformatory, and where the right kind of coöperation exists between the school authorities and the juvenile courts, it is often a simple matter to settle troublesome cases by the expedient of suspension, depending upon a wholesome fear of serious consequences to wheel the recalcitrant into line. In some cases, however, this coöperation is lacking. Those intrusted with the administration of the compulsory-attendance law will not always stand behind the school authorities; they will maintain that the boy or the girl has not committed an offense which would justify him in being characterized as an incorrigible, although he may be so troublesome in school as to make him a source of constant disorder. It is, after all, not the grave derelictions that worry the teacher; it is rather the little annoyances, — the halting

obedience, the sneaking mischief, the crude deceit with regard to little things, and the constant search for means of making trouble that will not be so serious as to merit drastic treatment, but which none the less gives rise in the aggregate to nine tenths of the loss in school efficiency that must be attributed to disorder.

It is our belief that, where the right of corporal punishment is taken away from the teacher, the right of suspension should be so clearly safeguarded that these trivial disturbances can be adequately met by this penalty. It is hardly befitting a teacher's work to be compelled to resort to the petty and ineffective devices cited above: having pupils sit by her side; keeping elaborate sets of merits and demerits the prize or penalty of which involves a monitorial position which few desire; an hour cut each week from a school day that has already been shortened pretty close to the vanishing point; or assigning extra lessons which all children should have the privilege of learning if they are worth learning.

Reporting Cases of Discipline to the Principal. — The efficacy of this policy depends very obviously upon the attitude and the efficiency of the principal. There are some schools in which a beginning teacher receives just the right kind of support in just the right amount; there are others in which the support really weakens the classroom teacher's authority; and there are still others in which the principal believes that the teacher should be left to work out his or her own salvation, no matter

how demoralized the classroom may become in the process. Policies differ in various systems of schools. In some, there is an effective spirit of coöperation; in others, the "interference" of the principal in classroom discipline is disapproved by the superintendent.

Personally it is the writer's belief that a supervising principal — and especially a man who is placed in charge of a number of young women teachers — can earn his salary in no better way than by giving them help and support in the disciplinary control of their pupils. He cannot afford to let them depend upon him exclusively, but he can demonstrate some wholesome lessons in the attitude which boys and men should have toward women. He should see that the authority of the teacher is not permitted to become ineffective simply because she lacks physical strength, and he should remember that an important lesson for every boy to learn is that he cannot with impunity be disrespectful to any woman, no matter how great the provocation.

The writer has had occasion more than once to administer this lesson to adolescent boys. He recalls one boy who was sent to the office from the room of a sharp-tongued teacher, and who was on the verge of rebellion, because, as he said, he "could not stand the scoldings" of this teacher, and would rather "take a good whipping" than be subjected to the stinging rebukes that she administered. His ire had been aroused and he had replied in kind. The temptation was great, as the writer knew well enough — but the necessity for suffering in silence was even greater. A long talk ensued. The ideals of respect for womanhood were laid

before the boy just as clearly as the writer could present them, — the need for self-control in situations of this type, the contempt that the world has for the man who fails in self-mastery, and the contempt that a man must have for himself when he has been recreant to chivalric ideals. The attempt to teach fundamental lessons through a preachment is not often successful, but it happened to be in this case, and the boy went back with an apology given in the right spirit. It was a lesson not listed in the syllabus on "morals and manners," but a lesson that every boy who is to become a gentleman and not a cad must learn sooner or later, and the school usually offers opportunities for its effective inculcation. It should go without saying, also, that the teacher in this case needed an admonition of somewhat similar tenor on the manifest unfairness of making cutting remarks.

The Dangers of Weak Sentimentalism in Doctrines of Discipline. — A very serious danger to the welfare of the schools (and to the stamina and "grain" of the coming generation) lies in the tendency to treat disciplinary problems from the emotional point of view. Sympathy there must be, as we have hitherto insisted, and the discussions of discipline do right to emphasize this factor. But sentimentalism there must *not* be. It is here that the advice given to teachers in their "institutes" has done incalculable injury to the children of the land. Teachers have been led into quite the wrong attitude by maudlin tales of the boy who was punished for being sleepy and who, the teacher afterward discovered, had been sitting up all night with his sick mother; of the poor lad who was treated harshly

for stealing a fellow pupil's lunch, when later investigation proved that he had come to school without breakfast, and perhaps had had for last night's supper only a crust of stale bread; of the poor girl who was compelled to remain after school and of whom it later developed that her father thrashed her because she could not go home in time to do the housework, — the recreant mother having left for parts unknown. Each one of these cases may be absolutely true in its details, and an occasional reference to the danger of injustice in discipline is certainly justified. But continual indulgence in this sort of pabulum has the same weakening influence that the wishy-washy Sunday school stories, once so popular, certainly exerted. And in a great many instances, the motive of the institute instructor in portraying these sad instances is not to instill a lesson, but rather to produce a momentary effect by a truckling appeal to sentiment. Add to this the fact that the cases are not always true, but very often purely imaginary, and remembering that the majority of American teachers receive no advice regarding discipline except that which drips down from the institute lecture platform, and the seriousness of the situation should be plainly apparent. We have known young teachers to return from these institutes with the most twisted disciplinary ideals imaginable, afraid to make even the most lenient requirements lest they commit one of the deadly sins against which their mentors had cautioned them.

There is needed, then, in the preparation of teachers

and especially in institute instruction, a united stand against what may be termed *the fallacy of the exceptional case*. It is the besetting sin of educational books of the "inspirational" type, and the damage that it does cannot be measured — except, perhaps, in the statistics showing the increase in disrespect for law.

The Place and Limits of Leniency in Discipline. — There are, of course, occasions when apparent offenses against the authority of the school must be either overlooked or forgiven. There are occasions when the pupil's realization of the unworthy character of his misconduct is so keen and even overwhelming that anything in the way of additional punishment is unnecessary either for the reform of the individual or for the protection of the group. But there are also certain occasions when leniency, while the line of least resistance, is quite the wrong policy.

It is not uncommon, for example, for a teacher to palliate an offense when the offender is known to have been tempted into the commission of the wrong by others. This is an injustice primarily to the individual himself. Certainly the tempters should be required to discharge their responsibility in the matter, but the offender himself must be taught that wrong done at the behest of others does not free the agent from the chief burden of guilt. Again, certain acts of vandalism or of marked disrespect are sometimes excused on the plea that "boys will be boys" — under the mistaken notion that just because a boy is a boy he is to be en-

couraged in making a general nuisance of himself. Finally, there are those whose attitude toward misconduct when a child is peevish or irritable — perhaps from loss of sleep or from malnutrition — or from "persecution" — is eminently adapted to develop in children the habit of feigning illness or imagining that people are "down on them," and of currying sympathy by heart-rending tales of woe. There is no greater all-round nuisance than the man or the woman who has been brought up to believe that he or she can be irritable and disagreeable if things do not go just right. Allowances may be made for individual weaknesses and corrective measures must be adjusted to individual needs, but maudlin sentiment and weak, silly leniency probably do as much harm in this world as do extreme severity and rigor.

In an address to teachers on the subject of discipline, we once heard an educator of good reputation and rather wide prominence make this statement: "Above all you must remember that every child at a certain stage of his development will lie a little, and a little later he will steal." We listened intently to discover what the speaker would recommend in the way of treatment, but this statement closed the topic, and the audience, — made up largely of teachers scarcely more than boys and girls themselves, — went from the lecture with the general impression that this tendency should remain uncorrected, and that the speaker would let children lie and steal until they had got the impulse out of their systems.

Summary. — In general we may conclude that one of the first duties of the teacher in discipline is to see to it

that the way of the transgressor is not a path of roses, and that, in the interest of the pupil himself, as well as in the interest of the group, misconduct is corrected. But it is also clear that the correction will vary in its intensity, not only with the nature and the gravity of the offense, but also with the nature of the individual. The administration of discipline must take into account individual differences, and these differences will be the theme of the following chapter.

Questions and Exercises

1. List the penalties described in this chapter in the order of their effectiveness in school discipline.

2. What forms of misdemeanor in school could be effectively met by imposing the penalty of "satiation."

3. Under what conditions (if any) would it be well to deprive a pupil of the recess period as a penalty for misconduct?

4. Herbert Spencer advocated leaving punishment to the operation of the "natural consequences" of misdeeds. Name some school misdemeanors that could be adequately treated by applying this theory.

5. What school penalties have, in your experience as a pupil and student, been most effective? Can you explain why they have been effective?

6. How would you organize a sixth-grade classroom in order to make certain monitorial positions prizes to be sought by the pupils, and the withdrawal of the privileges an effective penalty for misconduct? What monitorial positions would you establish, and how would you distribute them?

7. What standards would you apply in determining whether an offense should lead to light punishment, severe punishment, or no punishment at all?

CHAPTER XIII

The Troublesome Types

In the preceding chapters, the discussion has had to do chiefly with the unruly school, and an attempt has been made to classify and describe the ways in which this unruly spirit may be curbed and a more wholesome spirit engendered. While the most troublesome problems of control are associated with this task of reducing the unruly spirit prevailing among the majority of the pupils, and while the first efforts of the teacher must be directed toward these problems, other difficulties will appear from time to time even after a good spirit has been established.

The Two Functions of Discipline. — As a preliminary step to the discussion of these individual cases, it will be well to review two of the functions that disciplinary measures must fulfill. In the first place, the conditions that are essential to good school work must be preserved. The rights of the many must not be invaded or invalidated by the whims or the caprice of the few. The group must be protected against the individual. In the second place, the individual must be protected against himself, — against the impulses and desires that would interfere with his growth and his development.

The distinction here drawn should be explicitly recognized in school practice. There are many expressions and activities among the individuals of the pupil-group that are reprehensible simply and solely because they interfere with the rights of others, — they are inimical to the conditions that are essential to order, quiet, and industry; but they are not, in themselves, reprehensible. Whispering and note passing are typical examples of such activities. Disturbances in the classroom may be quite harmless as regards the progress of the individuals making the disturbance. Rough games and hand-to-hand physical combats in the school yard may be thoroughly wholesome and beneficial to the individuals concerned. But in all of these instances, the rights of others may be invaded, and this fact may serve to stamp the activities as antisocial and therefore as reprehensible. On the other hand, there are certain expressions and activities of the individual which would be inimical to his own progress, but which could hardly be said to interfere in any direct way with the welfare and progress of the group. The idleness of the individual, for example, unless it leads to distracting mischief (as it is quite likely to do), may be free from direct social consequences, and yet it is obviously a wrong to the individual to permit him to persist in this idleness. "Cheating" is, in general, to be looked upon as an individual defect, injuring primarily and directly only the individual himself; stealing, on the other hand, interferes unequivocally with the rights of others.

The distinction is somewhat analogous to that made in law between "crimes" and "misdemeanors" on the one hand, and "vices" upon the other hand. Crimes and misdemeanors may be vices as well, but there are some crimes that could scarcely be called vices and some vices that the law does not recognize as crimes. A crime or a misdemeanor is an offense committed against the state, — that

is, against organized society; and society itself determines what acts are to be recognized as offenses against itself. Thus the code of crimes and misdemeanors varies from generation to generation, and among different social groups in the same generation. The Ionians, for example, made it a crime not to laugh occasionally, and punished the criminal with exile. The modern world considers excessive gravity as a vice at worst, and at times in the world's history it has even been looked upon as a virtue. When printing was first introduced into Europe it was looked upon as anti-social, and to print a book in France during the second quarter of the seventeenth century was to commit a crime for which the death penalty could be exacted. Vices, on the other hand, are looked upon, not as wrongs against the state or against society, but simply and solely as individual faults. Society may condemn them, but it does not label them as crimes or misdemeanors unless it is convinced that the rights of others are directly imperiled.[1]

While the discipline of the law is concerned only with crimes and misdemeanors, — that is, only with offenses that have been distinctly recognized as against society, — the discipline of the school is equally concerned both with activities that invade the rights of others and with activities that are primarily reprehensible because of their effect upon the individual. And the school, too, must include under each head types of misconduct that could not be recognized either by the law as misdemeanors or crimes, or by society generally as vices. In other words, there are specific "school misdemeanors"

[1] Cf. F. H. Wines, *Punishment and Reformation*, New York, 1895, ch. ii.

and specific "school vices" which must be recognized and corrected. Whispering under certain conditions is a specific school misdemeanor; disobedience is a school misdemeanor; inattention and "scamping" one's work are specific school vices.

The Troublesome Types. — The writer recently asked three superintendents of large city school systems to give him the names of the three teachers in each system who were most competent from the point of view of "discipline." He then asked each of these teachers to state how many pupils under his or her charge would be classed as "troublesome." The answers indicate very clearly that, even in classrooms where order and discipline are most commendable, troublesome cases do occur. The proportions vary, but it is safe to say that, in every classroom of from thirty to forty pupils, at least three or four boys and one or two girls will be relatively hard to control. This suggests, among other things, the essential injustice of leading young teachers to believe that the presence of troublesome pupils reflects ignominious discredit upon themselves as teachers, — *a policy which has often succeeded effectually in covering up cases that need serious attention.* It also suggests the possibility of grouping these troublesome cases into "types" marked off from one another by certain definite characteristics, and associated with certain definite kinds of treatment. This represents a field of educational investigation not yet exploited. It is essential, however, to recognize the need of studying

individual cases, and while a thoroughly scientific and trustworthy classification of types cannot be made at the present time, something may be done to indicate to the young teacher some of the symptoms to look for and some of the steps that may be taken in dealing with the various groups.

The Stubborn Pupil. — This is perhaps the most troublesome type, — the more so because the highly refractory disposition may go hand in hand with a goodly measure of ability. There is a current theory that the lack of docility is a promising trait: a favorite metaphor compares the refractory child with the diamond in the rough which owes to its hardness the possibility of " taking " a high polish. There is possibly a germ of truth in the theory, but it should not be advanced — as it so often is, — to palliate weak-kneed and least-resistance methods of dealing with such children. The diamond still in the rough has no brilliance; its facets must be fashioned and tooled if they are to give forth their luster. And while the refractory child may be a genius in embryo, the chances are that the proper sort of discipline is essential to make the genius dynamic rather than potential. This is only another way of saying that the stubborn child must be conquered.

The prime requisite here is persistence. There must be neither compromise nor surrender. The task assigned must be done, no matter how disagreeable is the experience of compelling its doing. The writer once witnessed, at successive stages of the process, the conquest of a self-willed

child. This child was three or four years old, and had been permitted to cut papers on the promise that he would clean up the débris. When he had tired of the cutting, he was told to pick up the scraps, but he at once rebelled. The mother could easily have completed the task, but that would only mean, of course, a sanctioning of the disobedience, and postpone until a later date the inevitable conflict. The mother was too wise to adopt this "easy" solution. The storm broke about noon. It was raging when the writer left the house at one o'clock. At three when he returned it was still in progress; a few of the papers had been collected, but the floor was still littered. There was no sign of the breaking of the clouds. He left at four, and when he returned at six, the floor was clean, the boy was playing happily and serenely, and the mother was engaged in her household work. Inquiry revealed the fact that for nearly five hours a battle royal had raged, — and then, suddenly and apparently without warning, the capitulation had come.

There are those, of course, who will protest against this drastic method of "breaking" a child's will, but between this and the ineffectiveness of surrender or compromise there can be no reasonable question.

The teacher with thirty or forty pupils under his or her control cannot, of course, take the time of the class to deal with pupils who "balk" at certain requirements or assignments, but the necessity of persistence and the suicidal effect of surrender are no less clearly indicated. While less heroic measures should be tried first, there is every justification, if these fail, for retaining the pupil after hours until he accedes to the request or command in question, or even of resorting to corporal punishment or to suspension until he learns to obey.

What has been said should not be taken in disparagement of " diplomatic " and " tactful " methods of dealing with refractory cases, in so far as these do not involve surrender or compromise. In general, however, what most people mean by diplomacy in referring to problems of this type is simply letting the stubborn individual have his own way and making the best of it. It is well to be diplomatic, but the limits of the practice are clearly indicated. Diplomacy should keep one from needlessly arousing antagonism and from needlessly irritating the individual into a refractory mood. It should not be extended to indulging a whim under the impression that the favor of indulgence will be repaid in later repression and obedience. It is well in other words to insist that the boy do his chores before permitting him to go fishing. It is a fatal kind of diplomacy to let him go fishing first in the fond hope that he will so thoroughly appreciate the kindness that he will come back early and finish his work.

It is our belief that a goodly proportion of the "whiners" in the world owe their whining and petulant dispositions in part to weak methods of control in childhood. They then learned that a certain type of obstinacy usually gained their point, — whining and " fussing " and making themselves disagreeable until the opposition was worn out. This kind of false discipline is more frequently met with in the home than in the school, but it is not unknown in the latter institution. We have a distinct image of a little fellow in the second grade who was

obstinate by nature, and who had fortified his obstinacy by an unusual development of the art of whining and wheedling. If he could not have his own way, he would not rage; he would "sulk." He came from the most destitute family in the school district, and for this reason both pupils and teachers pampered him, — a type of tragedy that has not got into the story books!

The Haughty Pupil. — This type is much more hopeful than the stubborn type. Occasional trouble is experienced, however, in holding such pupils to the standards of conduct and achievement that must be made common to all. The haughty individual has an overweening sense of his own superiority, and in the case of children this idea is very likely to have been nurtured and intensified by the ideals and practices of the home training. If the public school means anything as a nursery of democratic ideals, it means that absolute equality of opportunity must prevail, and this implies that no exceptions can be made in the application of standards. Eminence in school life must come as the reward of exceptional individual ability as testified by individual achievement; and the individual seeking eminence of this type must do more than his share in the collective enterprises, not less than his share. He must stand out from his fellows because he has demonstrated his ability to bear a heavier burden, and not because the extrinsic factors of birth and social station relieve him from responsibilities that the humbler and less fortunate must bear.

Fortunately in most American families this wholesome point of view prevails; but there are some cases in which prominent and influential parents expect the school to give to their children special privileges and special favors, especially in the way of exemptions from stated duties. The teacher or the principal who truckles to these demands does so at the cost of his professional self-respect — and more often than not suffers materially, for, while the people as a whole may be trusted loyally to support measures that are just and equitable, there is nothing that will shorten the tenure of a teacher or a principal more certainly than an effort to gain the support of this or that influential citizen through showing special favors to his children.

Teachers who serve in districts where rich and poor live in close proximity and send their children to the same school are often approached by the wealthier parents to excuse pupils from school for trivial reasons, — attending parties, going to the theater, and the like. The attitude of these parents is well illustrated by a mother who approached a principal with a request of this type. She listened impatiently while the rules of school and the necessity for an impartial administration were explained. "But," she objected, "these rules are made for the ragamuffins who come to this school. They are not made for the children of good families. Of course these poorer children must be kept in school, for they will be subject to bad influences on the street and probably also at home; but *our* children do not belong to this class." Further argument seemed to be unavailing, and the mother left in a "huff," — but her daughter remained in school.

The Self-complacent Pupil. — The haughty pupil can ordinarily be effectively appealed to on the basis of his pride, but the self-complacent child is difficult to manage chiefly because he will not readily respond to this or any other stimulus. He is satisfied with his attainments, even though they be mediocre. His utter lack of shame or remorse when he fails is often pitiable to note. He is content to accept defeat, for defeat has no sting for him. Nothing will imperil his self-satisfaction, and he is likely to go through life working very far below his real ability. It is in cases of this type that the second problem of discipline — to save the individual from himself — becomes of prime importance.

The treatment " indicated " for the self-complacent pupil is simple enough in theory, but far from simple in application. It involves a continual incitement to higher standards. The devices of rivalry and emulation must be called upon in a degree that would be quite unnecessary with the normal child, and perhaps even harmful with the hypersensitive child. The self-complacent child, if (as is often the case) he has a goodly measure of ability, must be shown how far he is below attainments of others. Here the " scales " already referred to may play an important rôle. The " individual assignment " may also be employed with good results, provided that enough competition is added to keep the assignment from being " scamped."

The Irresponsible Pupil. This type has many characteristics in common with the self-complacent

pupil, but is likely to be more " flighty " and " effervescent." The irresponsible pupil cannot be depended upon to carry out directions or to be faithful to a trust. He shirks his duties and " scamps " his work. Like self-complacency, this irresponsible attitude is likely to grow upon itself and to become the source of serious trouble in later life; consequently, a serious problem of the early training is to counteract this unfortunate tendency.

There is no " royal road " to this goal. Responsibility is invariably an outcome of experience, and the problem is to provide experiences that will engender it. The older children in large families get the requisite training through numberless experiences in which they must render a strict accounting for the care of younger brothers and sisters. It is impossible to reproduce in the school conditions equally rigorous, but a great deal may be done in seeing to it that assigned tasks are faithfully executed, and especially that the child be led gradually to work for longer and longer periods independently of the direct oversight of the teacher. Eternal vigilance here, as in dealing with most of these troublesome types, is the price that must be paid for success. As one very successful teacher reports, "The only treatment that I have found to be effective in the case of irresponsible children is constant vigilance and strictness "; and another writes after " Irresponsible," the two words " Strict discipline."

Enlightening this constant rigor of discipline, however, there should be with children, in the upper grades at

least, some effort toward generalizing the virtues that the discipline emphasizes. Reference may be made to anecdotes which show clearly the meaning of responsibility. It is essential that these be presented artfully if they are to fulfill their important function. Too frequently these anecdotes fail to affect the conduct of the pupils because the characters whose actions are depicted are cast in too heroic a mold. The child sees nothing in common between the conditions that are being described and his own life. The stories interest him, but they do not inspire him to similar conduct. The very best anecdotes for this purpose are the true stories of faithful and heroic conduct upon the part of normal boys and girls. Collections of these are now available, and may be used, we believe, with very good effect.[1] Care must be taken not to " preach " or ostentatiously to " point the moral."

The " Boy Scouts " organization represents a well-matured plan for developing ideals of responsibility, and this plan is especially to be commended because it recognizes the necessity of relating the moral virtues to the simple affairs of everyday life. Its efficacy is to be explained in part by the fact that it enlists in the service of the moral and social ideals the boy's strong, instinctive interests in hunting, camping, and mimic warfare. The

[1] The methods of moral instruction devised by Mr. F. J. Gould perhaps illustrate most clearly the principles that we have in mind, and the anecdotes collected by Mr. Gould are especially commendable from this point of view. See also Sneath and Hodges, *Golden Rule Series of Readers*, and *Moral Training in School and Home* (New York, 1912).

privileges that the organization affords operate as incentives to the fulfillment of the conditions, and among these conditions it is a simple matter to include the virtues that we have been discussing.[1]

The Morose Pupil. — This is one of the most difficult types to deal with effectively. The morose pupil is likely to meet the best-intentioned advances sullenly and suspiciously. He wears a " chip on his shoulder " habitually. His constant attitude is one of antagonism, and the ultimate danger of permitting the attitude to grow upon itself is that his own antagonism incites a like attitude in others.

The first effort of the teacher, therefore, should be to preserve at all costs the " objective attitude," — to avoid falling into an antagonistic attitude toward the pupil. " Meet the sullenness with unvarying good nature " is the tenor of the reports from successful teachers regarding the treatment of this type. This, however, is only the initial step. Methods must be devised that will lead the morose child gradually " out of himself." He must become absorbed in his work, and here the " individual assignment " becomes of large importance, and among these assignments should be a liberal admixture of special school responsibilities. As one teacher says, " In dealing with a morose child, I have found the most effective plan to be that of investing him with special responsibilities.

[1] It is possible to organize Boy Scout camps in connection with schools. For directions as to procedure in the matter, address the Chief Scout Executive, 200 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

By calling upon him for help in any emergency, he is made to feel that he is indispensable. It is taken for granted that the dignities of his office will admit of no outbursts of temper, and I try to overlook any unfortunate slips of that kind." It is hardly necessary to add that an overplus of "wheedling" is to be avoided in dealing with these cases. The "whining," petulant attitude may be easily developed, and this should be avoided at all costs.

The Hypersensitive Pupil. — The "touchy," sensitive child is sometimes a neglected problem, — and unfortunately so, for his weakness is especially likely to become a serious handicap in his later life. He is not ordinarily "troublesome" in the sense that the mischievous and the stubborn child are troublesome. Indeed, if he were rather more of a "problem," matters might go better with him. He is likely to shrink from the companionship of the normal children, and to be satisfied with friends of his own kind, consequently he is likely to miss the wholesome discipline that comes from the rough-and-ready give-and-take of boy life. His sensitiveness is also likely to make him unusually docile, and the teacher, finding in him some one who never disobeys and for whose incitement or correction a mere nod or at most a word is sufficient, will show him favors that may still further widen the gulf between him and the children with whom he should associate on an equal footing.

Children of this type distinctly need "hardening" experiences. They should be encouraged to engage in the sports of the others, and, if possible, introduced

to some wholesome and vigorous activity in which they can " shine." It would be a mistake, however, to make such a child too conscious of his weakness, for this would only aggravate the attitude that needs correction. " Scolding " children of this sort is a negative measure that is commonly unavailing. Encouragement and praise, when merited, are much more effective.

The hypersensitive child is all too likely to evince symptoms that will be characterized by his fellows as cowardice. This opprobrium is scarcely deserved, for such children are not often " sneaks," — they understand the social stigma that attaches to behavior of that type too well, and they shrink from the stigma as a real " sneak " does not. They will not readily indulge in physical combat, however, for they shrink also from defeat. It is mental rather than physical pain which they find it so hard to bear. We once knew the mother of a child of this sort to lock the door on her offspring when he ran to the house from a gamin who had chased him down the street. The mother noted that the gamin and her own boy were " two of a size " and she believed that the latter could not learn on any better occasion to take blows and give them. She called to him to turn about and face the tormentor. Between the implied threat in her command and the fear of physical punishment from his fellow, the choice was clear, and the boy turned on his antagonist with clinched fists and teeth shut tight. It was a critical moment, but his courage held, and he went into the fray with a feeling quite new to him. He

emerged with a bloody nose and a black eye — but proud and triumphant. It was a turning point in his life, — precisely the kind of lesson that he needed. The writer in his experience as a teacher and principal has often been tempted to give boys who were subject to torment from their fellows the same Spartan advice, and on one or two occasions has yielded to the temptation; but, unfortunately for this type of child, school conditions forbid the encouragement of physical combat. The hypersensitive children must, consequently, be protected from persecution, even though it would be much better for them to learn to protect themselves.

The Deceitful Pupil. — We come now to a more serious form of individual weakness. Here a serious mistake is to permit efforts toward reform to be handicapped by the belief that the unfortunate tendencies express an inherent depravity. Deceit and "cunning" are to be looked upon as instinctive traits; every normal individual will evince the tendencies under certain conditions. In the abnormal cases, the tendency is unusually strong, either through inheritance or through the influence of experience. The child who finds that he can deceive successfully will inevitably practice the art.

Undoubtedly the most favorable time to correct the defect is in very early childhood. If from infancy the practices are invariably met with discouragement, if they are constantly associated with painful consequences, — they will die a natural death. When they persist into school life, the treatment is more difficult,

but the principle is the same. The conditions of school life should reduce the opportunities for deceit to a minimum, and where these opportunities are necessarily present, — as in examinations and tests, for example, — the supervision should be so close that lapses will run small chance of remaining undetected. There is good reason, also, for attaching to these lapses a serious stigma, but one must avoid inducing a permanent feeling of shame or a humiliating loss of self-respect. Along with this should go an appeal to the dormant ideals of honor and fair play. Such an appeal may be unsuccessful at the outset, but this should not preclude the attempt. Placing a child " on honor " may sometimes be the most effective measure that could be taken against the tendency to deceive, and, by the same token, excessive suspicion and constant watchfulness may simply serve as a challenge to cunning and evasion. To steer clear of both Scylla and Charybdis here requires a type of skill that usually comes only through the discipline of experience. The young teacher, however, will do better to err on the side of watchfulness than on the side of neglect. The most serious situation is one in which deceit and evasion are practiced without detection and to the progressive demoralization of the pupil body.

The Vicious Pupil. — Here we meet the type that could, perhaps, be consistently characterized as " depraved." Where these pupils are found in the school, they are usually the product of an unfortunate heredity and an equally unfortunate environment. But even though

the heredity may be clearly and unequivocally bad, the attitude of fatalism should be strenuously avoided. Traits that seem hopeless at the outset often yield to the right sort of treatment. An unfortunate hereditary "diathesis" must be met and counteracted in the moral and mental life precisely as in the physical life by processes of discipline much more severe than the normal individual will require. And by "severe" in this connection, we do not mean "harsh" or "cruel." Far from it. Very often, the kind of treatment that will be most effective is that which the home has never represented, — a type of treatment characterized by evidences of sympathy, care, and affection. Coupled with this must be a measure of firmness and decision which will effectually discourage the tendency to "work" the sympathizer, — for vicious children are sometimes adepts in this art, and the young teacher especially needs to be on his or her guard lest his well-intentioned measures defeat their own purpose most disastrously. When we say, then, that the treatment must be "severe" we mean that it must be unusually persistent, unusually patient, unusually intelligent, and unusually cautious. It must not be discouraged with apparent failure, but at the same time it must not become somnolent through apparent success. It must take account of all possible knowledge that can be gained from a study of the home environment, of the practices, habits, interests, and abilities of the individual.

Weak sentimentalism is dangerous at all points in

the administration of discipline, but nowhere more notably than in dealing with vicious pupils. The teacher has been exhorted to " love " the bad boy, — as if love were something that could be given or withheld at command. To single out the vicious child as the especial object of affection is to risk placing a premium upon unsocial conduct. To give refractory pupils unusual privileges and prerogatives in order to gain their good will is a plain case of bribing them to be good; to make a duty appear to the undiscriminating mind of childhood as a privilege to be given or withheld at pleasure is the last word in disciplinary inefficiency. But when children have failed to receive at home the affection that the normal child craves, expressions of interest in them and sympathy for them may work a miracle of transformation.

There are, of course, different varieties of depravity, and not all vicious children come from homes in which they have been neglected. The child may have become demoralized through indulgence and over-solicitude, and in this case he needs the sympathy of the teacher just as clearly as does the child from the mean and depraved home. But the sympathy here, while just as real, expresses itself in a quite different fashion. As Stanley Hall has so well expressed it, the child who has been "over-individualized" at home must be "under-individualized" in school, and *vice versa*.

The problem of *sex-hygiene* has recently been freely discussed from the point of view of school practice, and several

attempts have been made to introduce into the school program an effective type of sex instruction. It is too early as yet to conclude as to the practicability of attempting to solve this problem through the agencies of public education. In the first place, the nature of the sex impulse is not well understood even by specialists in sex psychology and pathology. A great deal needs to be done in the way of investigation and research before measures are initiated which would have so wide and pervasive an influence as is involved in making sex instruction a part of the elementary or high school programs. In the second place, as the race has long implicitly recognized, the raising of sex matters to the foreground of consciousness is likely to result in perversions and evils that might otherwise never be suggested. There is, indeed, no phase of life more quickly and fatally responsive to suggestion than this. In the third place, the limitations of the teaching population in respect of experience and maturity constitute an element of danger in carrying out through the public schools a propaganda of sex reform. Teachers who are scarcely more than boys and girls themselves are obviously unfitted to be intrusted with the delicate task which such instruction involves. A far better method of attacking the problem is through an educative campaign among parents. "Mothers' clubs" are now very frequently found as auxiliary organizations in connection with public schools, and these constitute an avenue through which sex knowledge can be passed on to the children in a most effective and natural way.

Where sexual vice of one sort or another has fastened itself upon a school community, however, a disciplinary problem of serious gravity arises; but the problem, let us insist, is primarily one of discipline, rather than of instruction. The corrupting influences must be sought out and eradicated at any cost. The first step in remedying these unfortunate

conditions must be vigorously and thoroughly "antiseptic," and this must be followed at once by treatment that is "aseptic." In other words, the first thing to do is to locate and root out the vice; and the next thing to do is to see to it that the chances of its recurrence are reduced to a minimum. Conditions must be created which will absorb the mind with wholesome activities. A well-ordered regimen of work and play is the surest safeguard. Supervised plays and games come to mind here first of all. The well-organized playground with a *responsible supervisor in continual charge* will minimize these and other evils very effectively; but it should be emphasized that the unsupervised playground is likely to accentuate the unfortunate conditions. Anything that tempts boys and girls to congregate promiscuously without adequate adult control is to be condemned in the strongest terms.[1]

Questions and Exercises

1. Arrange the "troublesome types" discussed in the chapter in the order of their frequency as found in the schools that you have known.

2. What type of treatment would you particularly avoid in dealing with the haughty pupil? the hypersensitive pupil? the morose pupil? the deceitful pupil? the vicious pupil?

3. To what extent would you acquaint a seventh-grade pupil who belonged to one or another of these types with the character of his weakness?

4. In a certain school, pupils are not only marked on the basis of their standing in school subjects, but they are also given marks on their report cards to indicate their "standing" in respect of certain moral and intellectual qualities, such as persistence, coöperation, attention, polite-

[1] See J. Bancroft, *Games for the Playgrounds;* H. S. Curtis, *Play and Recreation.* (Especially valuable for rural-school teachers.)

ness, initiative, courtesy, aggressiveness, loyalty, kindness, and the like. How would a plan of this sort operate in dealing with troublesome types?

5. What are the advantages of the Boy Scouts movement in relation to school discipline? Are there any dangers in organizations of this type?

6. How would you encourage a weak pupil to stand up for his rights among other pupils?

7. What are some of the dangers of weak sentimentalism in a doctrine of discipline? What steps would you take to prevent sympathy from doing more harm than good?

CHAPTER XIV

Discipline and the Doctrine of Interest

In the preceding chapters, the word "interest" has been used only infrequently. The avoidance of this term has been intentional. The "doctrine of interest" has been a very important factor in the improvements in classroom teaching and management that have marked recent educational development, but it is subject to misinterpretations and misapplications that are likely to issue disastrously, and this is particularly true when the doctrine of interest is made the central feature of one's disciplinary theory.

Interest and Efficiency. — It should be distinctly recognized, however, that the interest that one has in one's work, — the measure in which the work fascinates one, — is a most important factor in efficiency.[1] Enthusiasm releases energy that is otherwise unavailable. Indeed, there are good reasons for believing that what is called "mental fatigue" is due very largely to continuance in work when one is feeling a constant impulse to do "something else." When one is engaged in fascinating work, on the other hand, effort may be put forth

[1] Cf. E. L. Thorndike, *Educational Psychology*, vol. iii, New York, 1914, chs. v and vi.

practically to the point of physical exhaustion without bringing with it the symptoms of mental weariness. From the point of view of economy, the importance of insuring the conditions of interest in one's work is clearly apparent. But it is very important to understand what is meant by interest, and it is absolutely essential to recognize that disagreeable and unpleasant tasks are not to be shirked or scamped simply because they do not appeal from the point of view of immediate interest.

Limits in the Application of the Doctrine of Interest. — The naïve interpretation of the doctrine of interest has been unfortunate in that it encourages mental laziness, and lends a specious sanction to neglecting tasks that lack an intrinsic appeal. It encourages the attitude which waits for work that attracts, and discourages the appropriate and only rational attitude toward work, — namely, putting forth the effort to *make the work attractive*. It makes one the slave of one's desires and enthusiasms rather than their *master*.[1]

Further than this, an uncritical acceptance of the doctrine neglects completely the *social* demands. The evils of this tendency may be clearly seen in contemporary criticisms of the program of studies in the elementary

[1] The development of self-mastery in this sense is a basic principle in the theory of discipline advanced by F. W. Foerster, whose writings have had a profound influence in Switzerland and Germany. In his *Schule und Charakter* (Zürich, 1910), he criticizes the dominant ideals of American school discipline because they encourage, in the guise of interest, the following of the lines of least resistance. A brief account of Foerster's doctrine may be found in the *Journal of Education* (London), March, 1910.

and secondary schools. The reformers who would make for each pupil a separate curriculum comprising only the materials which appeal to him forget (or never grasped) the fundamental significance of having among all of the citizens of a democracy a common basis of habits, ideas, and ideals. Leaving out of account the handicap under which the individual must inevitably suffer if he escapes the training which others have had, the effect of deliberately encouraging conditions which would imperil social solidarity must be seriously considered.

The danger here is much more serious than is generally recognized. The present tendency in education is toward earlier and earlier differentiation of curriculums, and the basis upon which this differentiation is commonly justified is the doctrine of interest. The argument carries with it a certain measure of plausibility. Why should children be required to study subjects in which they have no interest when there are so many things that appeal to them? Why should the "motor-minded" child be compelled to occupy his time with books when his whole being calls out for a different type of activity? An appeal of this sort carries certain conviction unless one apprehends clearly the function of public education (and especially the function of elementary education) in laying this *common* basis among *all* of the future citizens of the land. It is a price that must be paid for social solidarity, — and not a heavy price compared with what a lack of mutual understanding among the people would inevitably involve.

The Conditions under which Interest is Engendered. — A common fallacy in the current discussions of in-

terest is to neglect the important fact that activities which do not appeal at the outset often come to be fascinating as one becomes habituated to them. This hopeful tendency may be illustrated in several ways.

(*a*) *The phenomena of the "warming-up" period* are especially interesting in this connection. One frequently notes in beginning one's daily work a feeling of *ennui* or distaste for the activity. For some time, perhaps, the work progresses very slowly and quite without interest or enthusiasm on the part of the worker. Its efficiency is also likely to be at a low ebb, although this is not always true. As one proceeds, however, one gradually "gets into the swing" of the work, the initial distaste vanishes, and enthusiasm and interest take the place of repugnance.

Students of the psychology of work recognize two different types of "swing" — a "general swing" for the day's work, and "special swings" for different types of work undertaken during the daily unit. Acquiring general swing is accomplished by some people through a brisk morning walk, or a cold bath, or gymnastic exercises. The universality of coffee as morning stimulant is doubtless due to the fact that it shortens the period during which one must "warm up" to the day's work. For each separate type of work, many people find it necessary to acquire a "special swing." The teacher will recognize the significance of this "swing" in passing from the teaching of one subject to the teaching of an-

other. It commonly takes a short time to get "into the spirit" of the new work.[1]

(*b*) Another illustration of the growth of interest and fascination with habituation is to be found in the *practice curve.* Whenever one masters a relatively complicated type of skill (such as telegraphy, stenography, the technique of instrumental music, speaking a foreign language, and the like), the progress is usually quite rapid at the outset and then becomes slower and slower as one approaches the limits of one's ability. The general form of this progress when plotted is that of a convex curve rising sharply and then gradually flattening out. The most significant fact regarding this practice curve, however, is that it is never regular, — unless, of course, the record shows only the gains made during long periods of time. When the progress is plotted

[1] The phenomena of general and special swing have important relations to the construction of the school time-table. Opening exercises, for example, should be planned to get the pupils into a general swing for the day's work, but they should not establish a special swing of their own, for this will have to be broken up when the special classwork begins. General exercises, then, should consist largely of familiar materials, — songs, favorite readings, and the like. Dr. F. H. Hayward has proposed a "school ritual" for such exercises, embodying responsive readings and chants which will embody in a beautiful and attractive form the great moral truths, and with which through repetition the pupils will become familiar. The need of acquiring a special swing for each exercise suggests the importance of having recitation periods long enough to prevent undue loss of swing in changing from one study to another. This is particularly true of the "content" subjects; in the drill work of the "formal" subjects, however, the periods may well be shorter, for here familiarity with the material will not necessitate so long a "warming-up" period.

from day to day, or from hour to hour, the curve exhibits a zigzag form. In a typical curve, indeed, *each marked rise in efficiency is almost invariably followed by a falling off*, and this depression may last over several practice periods, constituting what is known as a "plateau" of growth. So constant is this phenomenon that the existence of plateaus in learning may be considered inevitable.

From our present point of view, the universality of the plateaus in learning suggests at once the impossibility of carrying to the extreme the implications of the doctrine of interest. The plateaus represent periods during which growth is either very slow or absolutely nonexistent. They are consequently very often periods of mental depression. The lack of progress is likely to engender discouragement and to tempt one to surrender. The vital policy here, of course, is not one of surrender, but one of persistence. It is true that sometimes the best thing to do is to stop work for a while and let the elements of skill already mastered coalesce, but in general a policy of "giving up" is fatal. No small proportion of the "failures" in life is undoubtedly due to the fact that many men and women have never been able to get beyond the first plateaus in the mastery of the arts or skills that they have essayed. They have lacked the virtue of persistence, — or the courage to do the disagreeable task. They have given up the work and looked about for something else, — ignorant of the fact that every art that is worth mastering claims its

toll of effort and sacrifice from the learner. A doctrine of interest which insists that work must always be made fascinating encourages just this fatal attitude. The interest that should be sanctioned is the interest that comes with mastery, — not the temporary and evanescent interest that attaches to the new, the bizarre, and the unfamiliar.

(*c*) This suggests a third illustration of the fundamental principle that effective interests are products of growth. Not only do we have to "warm up" to our tasks and generate enthusiasm for them; and not only are there essential stages in the mastery of any art which are uninteresting and even disagreeable; but a most important factor in making anything pleasant and agreeable is the factor of *repetition*. All of the fine arts — music, painting, poetry, and architecture — recognize this principle. Not only does the artist provide for the repetition of a phrase, a theme, or a design, and so induce in those who look or listen that feeling of familiarity which is a prime source of æsthetic delight; but those who have learned to appreciate know well that the initial presentation may be in no sense an index of the pleasure that repetition will bring. The keenest enjoyments of appreciation come only when one *has worked up through effort and struggle to a point where appreciation is possible.*

But the principle of repetition has a wider application than is suggested by its employment in the realm of art. It operates through all of the affairs of life. Cus-

tom and habituation transform indifference into liking, change initial distaste into fascination, and endow the familiar and the commonplace with a subtle charm. It is the work that one has learned to do well through abundant practice that holds one with an iron grip. It is the skill that has cost the most that fills one with the keenest delight.

This does not mean, of course, that one can learn to do anything provided only that one persists in efforts at mastery. Native "gifts" must be accorded an important place in determining efficiency; and if one suffers under an irremediable native handicap, no amount of repetition and practice will bring him to the point of efficiency or serve to arouse in him that delight in mastery which is the richest reward that life can bring. But it is reasonable to believe that most men and women who fail owe their disaster, not to the fact that they have chosen an occupation for which they are inherently unfitted, but rather that they have been unable to work steadfastly and persistently until the discouraging "plateaus" have been conquered. This weakness of "will," it is true, may be an inherited defect, but if so, it is not specific in its operation but rather general; it would doubtless operate in the direction of failure whatever type of work one attempted.

The advice commonly given to boys and girls to let their interests determine their vocational choices is likely to be misleading in this connection. The vocational ambitions and interests of young people are commonly

determined by very superficial factors. There are certain kinds of work that are attractive to almost all boys at certain ages, — engineering, farming, forestry, seamanship, and the like. Imitation and the sanctions of the immediate social group also play an important part in determining such interests. Occasionally, a deep and permanent liking for a certain type of work is foreshadowed by these early appeals, but we are skeptical as to the general trustworthiness of interest as a symptom of ability. Far better it would be to encourage the boy or girl to find out what work needs to be done and then to determine whether he or she has native deficiencies which would permanently preclude his or her success. The movement known as "vocational guidance" promises to be of large service in promoting right choices of occupations, first, by acquainting young people with the various types of occupational life, — their advantages and disadvantages, their rewards, and the measure of discipline and training that they demand of their recruits; and, secondly, by identifying individual traits of an unmodifiable kind that may either promote or interfere with the acquisition of efficiency in the occupation selected. But the movement is likely to miscarry if it falls beneath the spell of the doctrine of interest in its current naïve form.

Mental Growth comes through overcoming Obstacles. — The fact that interest and fascination attach to activities that have become fairly well mastered should not be interpreted to mean that this is the only type of

interest that should be recognized, or that it does not have serious limitations as an educational principle. Routine is likely to be pleasant and attractive if it is not absolutely monotonous; that is, if it offers some new problems or involves a variety of sensory stimulation. The so-called "blind-alley" occupations — the messenger service, running elevators, paging in hotels, and the like — are only too attractive to certain types of mind. The routine is easy to master, little "thought" is demanded, and enough variety is provided to gratify the senses. As a general rule, the occupations that are routine in their character are dangerous because they are too pleasant; they make too slight a demand upon initiative and constructive effort; they present too few thought-compelling problems.

Mental growth, it is safe to affirm, comes only through effort, — only through the thoughtful, serious overcoming of real difficulties. In its very nature, thinking is *unpleasant*, for it means that one has been balked, delayed, brought to a halt. The peaceful flow of the conscious processes has been interrupted by a "crisis." The pleasure that comes with real thinking comes *when the terminus is in sight*, — when one can foresee how the means will reach the end, — and this anticipation of the successful issue may throw back its coloring over the earlier stages of the struggle. Thus in retrospect the entire experience may seem to have been pleasurable, although the likelihood is that many of the stages were extremely distasteful. This suggestion gains additional

strength from a recognized principle in the psychology of memory, — the principle, namely, that the unpleasant elements of past experience tend to fade much more rapidly than the pleasant elements,[1] — although the *objects* that have been associated with unpleasant experiences are commonly better remembered than the objects associated with pleasant experience.[2]

The Travail of Mental Growth. — Progress in the objective sense of the term (that is, progress in one's work) is commonly most rapid when the work is pleasant and agreeable, — when one is solving a problem with the end in sight and with abounding hope and enthusiasm. Here the perplexities have been resolved, the troubles are practically over. It has not been demonstrated, however, that the periods of effort and struggle, when one is groping for the light, are without their educative influence. True it is that unless the light ultimately comes, growth will be negligible; but if persistence and steady effort in the face of odds gradually lead to a solution, it means that one has climbed to a higher plane, and it is safe to assume that what we term in popular speech "mental strength" has been augmented thereby. The metaphorical comparison of mental and moral refinement to the refinement of gold through fire must be accorded a certain measure of justification. It takes a certain amount of suffering and

[1] Cf. H. L. Hollingworth: "The Oblivescence of the Disagreeable," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, vol. vii, pp. 709 ff. [2] E. Meumann, *Vorlesungen*, 1907. vol. i, p. 151.

perhaps even of agony to lift one to the higher planes. The " travail " of mental growth is too thoroughly substantiated by human experience to be dismissed as a myth.

It is both possible and probable that there are individual exceptions to this general rule. Some men appear to drift into power and ability as readily as a boat might drift before a favorable wind into a safe harbor; but, in general, the chances of one's making progress in this way are very slight, and the theories that sanction such alluring hopes are consequently fraught with danger. This is the most serious difficulty with the doctrine of interest. As its expositors understand it, there would be little in it to criticize, for they provide very carefully for all exigencies. But the element of danger lies in the fact that it will be misinterpreted as sanctioning the lines of least resistance, and anything that does this is educationally questionable if not, indeed, thoroughly vicious.

The theory that mental growth is not only possible, but most certain and most wholesome under conditions that encourage the shunning of disagreeable tasks, has the support of influential authority. Madame Montessori, for example, decries duty and sacrifice as second-rate ideals, holding that only weak nations have glorified restraint, and that only inferior individuals need to be subjected to this type of discipline.[1] This is an extreme view which few of the advocates of the doctrine of

[1] Cf. M. Montessori, *Pedagogical Anthropology* (trans. by F. T. Cooper), New York, 1913, pp. 92–93.

interest would indorse, and yet it is the logical terminus of the kind of reasoning which the doctrine involves.[1]

The Relation of Discipline to Mental Growth. — From the point of view of the second problem of discipline, — the problem of "saving the individual from himself," — the paramount duty of the school is to teach the pupil to do vigorously and relentlessly the tasks that his hand finds to do; to acquaint him with the necessity of working courageously when the task does *not* attract, and when each forward step involves supreme effort; to encourage him to hold momentary desire and fancy in leash while he is pursuing the goal; to train him to bear the agony and the travail that are essential to the overcoming of difficulties; and, finally, to aid him in generalizing these lessons gained through many experiences into effective ideals of effort, persistence, and rigorously thoughtful procedure.

[1] Some light could be thrown upon this problem by a careful questioning of men of marked achievement. So far as the writer has been able to interview such men, the opinion is general that significant advance comes only through a process which the word "travail" best expresses. Professor A. L. Hall-Quest, in an unpublished study based on a *questionnaire* investigation of methods of mental work, has reached similar conclusions. About one in five of those replying to his *questionnaire* asserted that the solutions of the problems that they were facing came to them suddenly and without apparent effort, — often during a day-dream or "revery," when — to use an expression of Beaunis — they were "thinking of nothing." But the remaining eighty per cent stated that they had to struggle long and hard with their work, and implied that many phases of it were distinctly distasteful. One man of rare attainments whom the writer questioned said that the word "interest" would be the very last term that he would use in describing the experiences from which he had derived the largest increments of mental growth.

This task is not to be accomplished by continually appealing to evanescent interests or to problems that attract because of their novelty or their relative simplicity. But neither can it be accomplished by inventing difficulties and arbitrarily compelling the pupil to overcome them. The old-time school sought to accomplish the desired end (which the old-time schoolmaster saw very clearly) by a process akin to this. The purpose was commendable, but it was almost inevitably defeated by the means which the old-time school employed; at any rate, while a few doubtless profited by the severity of the treatment, and really gained in power and strength by the experience, the great majority were permanently disheartened and, consequently, weakened. Strength comes from overcoming difficulties, but difficulties that are not overcome are not sources of strength. Climbing will bring one to a higher plane, but if the climber continually tumbles back and never reaches the summit, his experience is the worst imaginable type of preparation for later struggles. So long as strained relations exist between pupil and teacher, the kind of effort that makes for mental growth is likely to be absent. It is only when something akin to *rapport* exists, — it is only when the work rather than the teacher becomes the master, and when the relationship of counselor and guide rather than that of taskmaster has been established, — that this end can be effectively gained.

Given these favorable conditions, however, the oppor-

tunities for stimulating the pupil to climb to higher planes are numerous. The teacher can then lead the pupil to induce from his own struggles and triumphs the essential lessons of persistence, patience, and resolute thinking. It is here, we take it, that the art of teaching culminates; certainly it is at this point that discipline in the broadest sense of the term becomes an effective agency for growth in mental power and ability.

Questions and Exercises

1. Note in your own work the effect of interest, enthusiasm, and fascination upon efficiency. Note under what conditions you do (*a*) the best work, (*b*) the most work.

2. Note the influence of pleasant and unpleasant work with reference to the feeling of weariness or exhilaration that each may give rise to.

3. Do you find that it is necessary to go through a period of "warming-up" to get into a "general swing" for the day's work? Watch your daily "work curve" for variations in this connection.

4. At what points in the mastery of a new art or skill have you found the work most laborious and least interesting?

5. Can you find in your own experience illustrations of the statement that "fascination comes with habituation"?

6. State the doctrine of interest in a form that will not encourage the following of the lines of least resistance.

INDEX

Accuracy, 67.
Achievement, in pupil group, 223.
Address, and teaching personality, 31, 32.
Administration of school, and discipline, 17, 19, 48, 59 f., 115, 124 f., 128 ff., 147, 156 f., 209 ff.
Adolescence, corporal punishment in, 184.
Æsthetic appreciation, factor of effort in, 245.
Anecdotes, as means of moral training, 227.
Anger, and punishment, 195; and the objective attitude, 52.
Animal psychology, reward and punishment in, 166.
Antagonism, attitude of, 63, 251.
Apology, collective, 101.
Appearance, personal, 31 ff.
Arithmetic, standard tests in, 68 f.; individual assignments in, 76, 80.
Arnold, F., 134 *n.*
Arnold, Thomas, 111.
Ascham, R., 176.
Assembly room supervision, 160 f.
Assignments, individual, 75 ff.
Association of reward or penalty with conduct, 164 f.
Attitude, objective, 25, 51 ff.; of public toward discipline, 54, 172 f.; of pupils, 2, 20, 62 ff., 98, 200.
Authority, respect for, 51.
Ayres, L. P., 68.

Bancroft, J. B., 236.
Beccaria, C., 182.
Bentham, J., 182.
Biblical injunctions regarding corporal punishment, 179 f.
"Bluffing," 149.
Book, W. F., 35.
Boyce, A. C., 26.
Boy Scouts, organization of, in schools, 227 f.
"Boys will be boys," 213.
Braselman, F. M., 203.
"Breaking the will," 221.
Buellesfield, H., 26, 27.
Buildings, mutilation of, 153 f.
Burriss, W. P., 129.

Cajolery, 94, 192.
"Calling names," 14, 150 f.
Certainty of consequences as factor in discipline, 133 ff.
Cheating, 95 ff., 217.
Children, rights of, 21, 154.
Citizenship, training for, 106, 239 f.
Civil government, analogies to school government, 132, 218.
Civil law, flogging as penalty in, 174.
Clapp, F. L., 30, 32, 33, 42.
Clubs, in school life, 114.
Coercion, by social group, 113 f.; in discipline, [illegible]; why disappearing from schools, 171 ff.
Coffman, L. D., [illegible].
Colet, Dean, 177 *n.*
Collective competition, 71 f.
Collective offenses, 100.
Collective reparation, 99, 150.
Collectivism, and theory of discipline, 22.
Colwell, W. A., 96.
Comenius, [illegible].
Common elements in education, 64 f., 240.
Community, support of teacher by, 36.
Competition, between individuals, 70; among groups, 71 f.; with best previous record, 70.
Conduct, modification of, 164 ff.

Confinement, solitary, as school penalty, 199.
Consequences, association of, with acts, 165.
Constitution, provision against cruel punishments, 175.
Cooper, W. M., 173, 174, 175 *n.*, 177 *n.*, 178.
Coöperation, 2, 5, 90 ff.
Corporal punishment, 143, 149, 170 ff., 221; decline of, in school, 175 ff.; infliction of, 194 f.; legal decisions concerning, 175, 195; place of, 192; reaction against, 173 ff.
Coup, importance of the decisive, 136 ff.
Courtis, S. A., 68, 69.
Cowardice, 230.
Crime, in youth, 22 f.; increase in, 187.
Crimes, distinguished from vices, 217 f.
Criticism of pupils by one another, 103 f.
Criticisms of educaiton, 64 f., 125.
Curtis, H. S., 236.

"Dark room," as punishment, 200.
Davis, J. B., 115, 116.
Davis, J. N., 158, 159.
Decadent schools, 17 f.
Deceit, as instinct, 231.
Deceitful pupil, as a troublesome type, 231 f.
Delay in administering punishment, 206.
Delinquency, juvenile, 187.
Demerit marks, as punishments, 204 ff.
Democracy, ideals of, 7; educational basis of, 239 f.; retrograde movements in, 193; theory of, 93.
Democratic ideals, and discipline, 223.
Departmental schools, pupil organizations in, 116.
Departmental teaching, 129.
Dignity, as factor in teaching personality, 31, 32.
Diplomacy, and tact, 42 f., 222.
Dirigibility of enthusiasm, 122 f.
Disagreeable, discipline of the, 165 ff., 247 f.
Discipline, and experience in teaching, 33; and procrastination, 38 ff.; and supervision, 19; and tactlessness, 42 ff.; and training for teaching, 33; functions of, 10, 216 f.; and disrespect for law, 188 ff.; and interest, 238 ff.; meaning of, 6 ff.; military, 6; new ideals of, 1 f., 179 ff.; philosophy of, 20 ff., 238 ff.
Disobedience, willful, 148 ff.
Docility, 16, 90.
"Dunce-caps," as penalties, 198.
Duty, and pleasure, 44; and sacrifice, 249.

Education, ideals of, 6 f.; in earliest years, 231; vocational, 183; theory of, and discipline, 56, 238 ff.; common elements in, 64 f., 240.
Efficiency, and interest, 238 f.
Effort, and achievement, 244; and discipline, 119 f.
Elementary school, causes of failure among teachers of, 26 f.
Emulation, 225.
Encouragement, 230.
England, crime in, 133.
English schools, self-government in, 111.
Enthusiasm, as factor in teaching personality, 31 ff.; as function of youth and inexperience, 27; dirigibility of, 122 f.; enemies of, 124 ff.; of the teacher, 16.
Erasmus, 177 *n.*
Espionage, 105 ff., 111.
Eugenics, 183.
Evolution of idea of punishment, 179 ff.
Examinations, cheating in, 95 ff.
Exceptional case, fallacy of, 213.
Experience, and discipline, 25 ff., 27 f., 33.

Fad, distinguished from fashion, 4.
Failure, causes of, among teachers, 26 f.
Fairness, as factor in teaching personality, 31 f.
Fallacy of exceptional case, 213.
Falsifying, 135.
Fashion, as characteristic of well-disciplined school, 2 ff., 51, 112 f., 199; meaning of, 3 f.; wrong, 14 f., 114, 142 ff.

Fatigue, and interest, 238.
Favors, as rewards for good conduct, 93.
Feeling, expression of, 59 f.
Feelings, hurt, 43, 54, 59, 229 f.
Feminization, of teaching population, 172.
Fighting, 217, 230; instinct of, 179, 180 *n.*
FINDLAY, J. J., 111.
Fire-drills, order imperative in, 150 f.
FIRKINS, O. W., 95, 96.
Flagellants, sect of, 173 f.
Flogging, as civil penalty, 174; as military penalty, 175 *n.*; of women prisoners, 174.
FOERSTER, F. W., 239.
Freudian theory of mental derangements, 55.

Gambling, 134 f.
Gary (Ind.) schools, 129.
Generalization of virtues, 227.
General merit in teaching, 25 f.
Geography, individual assignments in, 72.
Girls, corporal punishment of, 184.
Good name of school, as source of pride, 102.
GOULD, F. J., 227.
Government, by pupils, 8, 105 ff.
Grievance, personal, 57 f.
Group responsibility, and discipline, 90 ff.
Group rivalry, 71 f.

Habit-formation, 242 ff.
Habits, of work, 119.
HALL, G. S., 234.
HALL, H. E., 108.
HALL-QUEST, A. L., 250 *n.*
Handwriting, scales for measuring, 68 f.
HANUS, P., 190.
"Hardening" experiences in discipline, 229.
HARPER, W. R., 124.
Harshness, 16 f.
Harvard-Newton scale, 68, 69.
Haughty pupil, as troublesome type, 223 f.
Hazing, 151 f.
Heredity, and personality, 38; and training, 233.
High school, discipline in, 84 f., 99 ff., 140 f., 160 f.; failure among teachers of, 26 f.; pupils' opinions of teachers in, 35; theft among pupils of, 152 f.
HILLEGAS, M. B., 68.
History, individual assignments in, 72.
HODGES, G., 227.
HOLLINGWORTH, H. L., 248.
Homicides, increase in, 188.
Honesty, in examinations, 95, 97.
Honor system, 95 ff.
HOWARD, JOHN, 183.
Humanitarian ideals, development of, 181 f.
Humiliation, growing prejudice against, 184, 198.
HUXLEY, T. H., 122.
Hygiene, sex, 234 f.
Hypercritical attitude, 103.
Hypersensitive child, 43, 225; as type, 229 ff.

Ideals, of discipline, 6 f.; of punishment, 179 ff.; generalization of, 227.
Idleness, 217.
Ill-temper, and discipline, 41 f.
Immunities, as rewards, 93.
Incorrigibles, segregation of, 172.
Indecency, 134.
Individual assignment, 225, 228; as means of reducing unruly spirit, 75 ff.
Individual differences, 215, 219 ff.
Individual, protection of, against himself, [illegible]
Individual treatment, principle of, 159 f., 219 ff.
Individualism, and collectivism in disciplinary theory, 21 f.
Indulged school, 142 ff.
[illegible] 20 ff.
Inexperience, and failure in teaching, 27 f.
[illegible]
Injustice, collective, 100.
Insolence, 154 ff.
[illegible]

Instinctive basis of punishment, 179 f.
Insult, 154 f.
Interest, 2, 5, 66, 228 ff.; dirigibility of, 123.
Interference in matters of discipline, 157 ff., 224.
Intimidatory punishment, 181.
Irresponsible pupil, as troublesome type, 225 ff.

James, W., 130.
Jealousy, 44.
Jesuit schools, corporal punishment in, 176.
Johnston, C. H., 115.
Justice, 157 f.; ideal of, 180 f.
Juvenile delinquency, increase in, 187.

Keeping after school as punishment, 203 f.
"Keeping in" at recess, 204.
King, I., 83, 85.

Law, respect for, 194.
Legal decisions concerning corporal punishment, 175, 195.
Leniency, and disrespect for law, 187 f., 191 *n.*; place of, in school discipline, 213 ff.; toward criminals, 186 *n.*
Lindsey, B., 22, 23.
Lines, mischief in, 14.
Littler, S. H., 26, 42.
Locke, John, 176.
Loyalty, to craft ideals, 19.
Lying, 135.

McCormack, T. J., 99, 100.
McDougall, W., 37, 180.
McMurry, F. M., 190.
Malicious mischief, 142 ff., 150 ff.
Marble-playing, 134 *n.*
Marine Corps, as illustrating disciplinary efficiency, 133.
Marking of walls, 134.
Marks, demerit, 204.
Maturity of teachers, and discipline, 24.
Mechanized routine, and discipline, 46 f.
Mental attitude, toward discipline, 2, 20, 54, 62 ff., 98, 172 f., 200; objective, 25, 51 ff.
Mental growth, and discipline, 250 ff.; travail of, 248 f.
Mental strength, 248.
Merit, in teaching, 25 f.
Meumann, E., 248.
Mischief, 161; malicious, 142 ff., 150 ff.
Misdemeanors, school, 218.
Mode, as synonym of fashion, 3 f.
Monitorial positions, as rewards, 204 ff.
Montessori, M., 249.
Moral outcomes of discipline, 95 ff.
Moral training, 106, 114, 210 f., 227; and corporal punishment, 190.
Morose pupil, as troublesome type, 228.
Moses, Cleda, 27.
Mothers' clubs, 235.
Mounted police of Canada, as illustrating disciplinary efficiency, 133.
Mutilation, of buildings, 153 f.

Nagging, 19, 210 f.
Neatness, as qualitative standard, 67.
Nervous tension, avoidance of, 121.
Neumann, H., 154.
New York City schools, 204 ff., 190, 192.
Normal schools, recommendation of teachers by, 40.
Note passing, 217.

Obedience, 92, 140 f., 148 ff.; attitude of, 151.
Objective attitude, 25, 51 ff.
Offender, locating responsibility in, 160.
Ohio School Survey, quoted, 81.
Optimism, as factor in teaching personality, 31 f.
Order, fashion of, 51.
Organizations, pupil, 114 f.
O'Shea, M. V., 27, 162.

Pain, as a deterrent, 166.
Parent, analogies to teacher, 92.
Parents, conferences with, 196, 199, 207 f.; tact in dealing with, 45.
Peevishness, 214.
Penalties, contemporary school, 198 ff.; efficiency of, 166; psychology of, 164 ff.
Penmanship, scales of, 68 f.

Perry, A. C., Jr., 93.
Persistence, 243; necessity of, 220; principle of, in discipline, 139.
Personal appearance, as factor of teaching personality, 31 f.
Personal grievances, 57 f.
Personality, domineering, 37 f.; in teaching, 29 ff.
Perversions, induced by corporal punishment, 184 f.
Petty theft, 152 f.
Phelps, W. L., 41, 47, 123, 162.
Philosophy of discipline, 20 f., 238 ff.
Plateaus, in practice curve, 186 *n.*, 243, 245.
Play, regimen of, 236.
Playground movement, 183, 236.
Playgrounds, 22, 236.
Pleasant consequences, contrasted with unpleasant, 165 f.
Pleasantness in learning, 247.
Plutarch, 176.
Political conditions affecting education, 17.
Practice curve, 186 *n.*; and doctrine of interest, 242 ff.
Preaching, in moral training, 227.
Prejudice, social, 168, 183 f., 194.
Prevention *vs.* punishment, 183.
Principal of school, and discipline, 124 f.; reporting cases to, 142, 209 ff.
Privileges, as rewards, 93; and rights, 20; withdrawal of, as punishment, 207.
Probation system, results of, in civil government, 186 *n.*
Problematic situation in teaching, 75 ff.
Problems, objective, 60.
Procrastination, in discipline, 38 ff.
Profanity, 134.
Professional status of teacher, 54.
Program, daily, 48, 121, 242 *n.*
Proportionate punishment, ideal of, 180.
Protective punishment, 181.
Psychology, animal, 166; of rewards and penalties, 164 ff.; of solitary treatment, 200.
Public attitude toward discipline, 21, 158 f., 172.
Punishment, corporal, 170 ff., 194 f.; place of corporal, 193; evolution of, 179; proportional, 180; protective, 181; intimidatory, 181; reformatory, 182, 198; *vs.* prevention, 183.
Punishments, cruel, 175 *n.*, 192.
Pupils, types of, 216 ff.; deceitful, 231 f.; haughty, 223 f.; hypersensitive, 229 f.; irresponsible, 225 ff.; morose, 228 f.; self-complacent, 225; stubborn, 220 ff.; vicious, 232 ff.; organizations of, 114; government by, 105 ff.; gaining confidence of, 136.
Purchasing order with favors, 93.

Qualitative standards, raising, 62 ff.
Qualities of merit among teachers, studies of, 25 f.
Quintilian, 176.

Rage, and discipline, 41 f.
Raising standards, 62 ff.
Rapport, between teacher and pupils, 92, 251.
Rational attitude, of pupils toward discipline, 62.
Reading, individual assignments in, 71.
Rebellion, among pupils, 22 f., 140 ff.
Rebukes, 210; as penalties, 202; of class as whole, 161 f.
Reformatory conception of punishment, 182, 198.
Regimen, of work, 119 ff.; disciplinary effect of, 119 f.; establishment of, 121 ff.; of work and play, 236.
Religious flagellation, 173.
Reparation, collective, 99, 150.
Repetition, and doctrine of interest, 244 ff.
Reporting disciplinary cases, 209 ff.
Repression, 7.
Reserve, as factor in teaching personality, 31 f.
Respect, for authority, 51; for law, 194.
Responsibility, [illegible] of social teacher, 48; of teacher, 92.
Retaliation, in punishment, 179.
Rewards, psychology of, 164 ff.
Rights, and privileges, 20; individual, [illegible] of children, 11, 141; of children [illegible] interference with, 217

Right start, importance of, 40 f.
Rivalry, 225; self, 70; among groups, 71 f.
Rod, decline of, 173 ff.
Ross, E. A., 3.
Rousseau, J. J., 176.
Routine, and discipline, 46, 119 ff.
Rowdyism, 190.
Ruediger, W. C., 25.
Rules, and discipline, 43, 134.
Ruskin, J., 163.

Sacrifice, 63, 249.
Sanctions, social, 90 ff., 95, 105, 113, 135, 171, 177, 181, 183 f.
Satiation, as a penalty, 201 f.
Scales, objective, 68 ff., 225.
"Scamping work," 15.
Scholarship, as factor in teaching personality, 31 f.
School, fires in, 150 f.; the indulged, 142 ff.; leniency in, 188; supporting good name of, 102; unruly, 14 f., 29 ff., 51 ff.
School city, 105.
School government, contrasted with civil government, 218.
Schoolhouse, construction of, as regards discipline, 134.
School penalties, contemporary, 198 ff.
School surveys, 102, 190 f.
School virtues, 67.
Scolding, 160, 230; as penalty, 202 f.
Secondary school, failure among teachers, 26 f.; discipline in, 84 f., 99 f., 140 f., 160 f.; pupils' opinions of teachers in, 35; theft among pupils of, 152 f.
Segregation of incorrigibles, 172.
Self-complacent pupil, as troublesome type, 225.
Self-control, 9, 51 ff., 239.
Self-discipline, 38, 239.
Self-government, 8, 94, 105 ff.; legitimate uses of, 109 f.; in English schools, 111.
Self-respect, 198; and corporal punishment, 184; loss of, 232.
Self-rivalry, 70.
Sentimentalism, in discipline, 192, 211 ff., 233 f.
Severity, 16 f., 133, 184 f., 214, 233.
Sex hygiene, 234.
Sexual vice, 235.
Sharp, F. C., 154.
Sincerity, as factor in teaching personality, 31 f.
"Smartaleck-ism," 14, 150 f.
Smith, W. H., 65.
Smith, S., 186.
Sneath, E. H., 227.
Snowballing, 44, 134.
Social basis of education, 65, 240.
Social conditions affecting discipline, 18, 20, 36, 63.
Social demands in education, 239.
Social prejudices, 183 f., 194.
Social progress, zigzag character of, 185 f.
Social sanctions, 171, 177, 181, 183 f.; and discipline, 135.
Society, method of control in adult, 113.
Soft-heartedness, 192.
Solitary treatment, principle of, 199 f.
Spelling, 71 f.
Spencer, H., 4, 156, 176, 215.
Spoiled school, 142 ff.
Stableton, J. K., 97.
Standards, raising qualitative, 62 ff.
Stealing, 135, 152 f.
Stories, in moral training, 227.
Strategy, expressed in children, 38; in discipline, 52, 159.
Strayer, G. D., 25.
Strictness, in dealing with irresponsible child, 226.
Stubborn pupil, as troublesome type, 220 ff.
Style, and fashion, 3 f.
Subjection, instinct of, 37.
Suggestion, 121.
Suicide, of teachers, 55 f.
Superintendent, and school discipline, 17, 59, 124 f., 128, 147, 156 f., 224; judgments of, regarding teaching personality, 31.
Supervision, as discipline, 17, 19; of study and assembly rooms, 160 f.
Surrender, in cases of discipline, 221; in learning, 243.
Surveys, school, 102, 190 f.

Suspension, 199, 221; as punishment, 208; contrasted with corporal punishment, 195.
Swing, 241 f.; special, 242 *n.*
Symbolic operation of punishment, 170 f.
Sympathy, 2, 20; and discipline, 34 ff.; and sentimentalism, 192; as factor in teaching personality, 31 f.; lack of, in supervision, 128.

Tact, in discipline, 222.
Tactlessness, 42 ff.
Talebearing, 105 ff.; how to avoid encouragement of, 108 f.
Tasks, as punishments, 206.
TAYLOR, J. S., 204, 205, 206.
Teacher, analogies to parent, 92; attitude of, in decadent schools, 18; ideal relationship to pupils, 91; personality of, 29 ff.
Teachers, worry among, 190; preparation of, 23 ff.; pupils' opinions of, 35; special, 129; suicide of, 55 f.
Teaching instinct, 30.
Teaching population, feminization of, 172; inexperience of, 235; tenure of, 25 ff.
Temper, 45; and discipline, 41.
Testimony, giving of, 107 f.
Theft, 152 f.
Theory of discipline, 56, 238 ff.
"Think room," 200.
Thinking, relation of doctrine of interest to, 247.
THORNDIKE, E. L., 68, 238.
Time-table, daily, 121, 242 *n.*
Training, and discipline, 33.
Travail, of mental growth, 248 ff.
Troublesome types, 219 ff.

United States, increase of crime in, 133.
Unpleasant consequences, discipline of, 165 f.
Unpleasantness, in mental growth, 247.
Unruly school, 51 ff.; general causes of, 14 ff.; problem of, 10 f.; raising standards in, 62 ff.; specific causes of, 29 ff.

Vacillation, and discipline, 36 ff.
Vandalism, 134, 213.
Vice, sexual, 235.
Vices, distinguished from crimes, 217; school, 218.
Vicious conduct, 150 ff.
Vicious pupil, as troublesome type, 232 ff.
Vigor, in teaching, 27, 121 ff.
Vindictive punishments, 180.
Virtues, generalization of, 227.
Vitality, as factor in teaching personality, 31 f.
Vocational choices, 245.
Vocational education, 183.
Vocational guidance, 246.
Voice, correction of defects in, 50.
Voice of teacher, and discipline, 47.

"Warming-up" period, and doctrine of interest, 241 f.
Washington Irving High School, 139 ff.
Weakness of will, 36 ff., 245.
"Whining," 222, 229.
"Whipping-boys," 177 *n.*
Whispering, 217.
WHITE, E. E., 58, 149, 221.
Will, "breaking" of, 221; weakness of, and discipline, 36 ff., 245.
Willful disobedience, 148.
Willfulness, 90.
WINES, F. H., 218.
WINSHIP, A. E., 55, 195.
Work, as master, 63 ff., 230; psychology of, 241 ff.; regimen of, 118 ff.; habits of, 118.
Worries, as enemies of enthusiasm, 127; among teachers, [illegible]
Writing, scales for measuring, 68 f.
"Writs of Assistance," quoted, 14, 148, 203.

YERKES, R. M., 166.
Youth, advantages of, in teaching, [illegible]

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