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School Discipline.

Read by W. WELCH, Esq., M. A. before the College of Preceptors.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I have been asked to read a paper before you to-night, similar to the one I had the pleasure of reading at the Conference of Teachers held at King's College; and, presuming that there are some present who heard that paper, I may perhaps be allowed to point out that, whereas I then touched upon only one point in reference to discipline, I now propose to take a somewhat wider view. The point on which I then laid stress was not the use of externals in the maintenance of discipline, but the power of sympathy between the teacher and the taught.

Professor Laurie, in his recent address, told us that "The aim of the educationist is mainly discipline, and the aim of discipline is the production of a sound mind in a sound body, the directing and cherishing of the growth of the whole nature, spiritual and physical, so as to make it possible for each man, within the limits of the capacity which God has given him, to realise in and for himself, with more or less success, the type of humanity, and in his relation to others to exhibit a capability for wise and vigorous action."

Now, though I propose to touch but little on this side of the question, it is a side which after all is most important, and which must have due weight in the mind at all times when we are dealing with School

Discipline. This description tells us that the aim of discipline is the training of the individual; but to practical schoolmasters the word will suggest another idea as well.

Discipline, then, being a word of somewhat wide import, I will at once state that by School Discipline I wish to imply one or both of two things:

1. The mode or modes by which those at school are brought to conform to certain regulations and forms.

2. The state into which they are brought.

And here I must guard myself, by saying that my remarks have reference to boys' schools only, my knowledge of schools for the other sex being very limited. I may, however, be allowed to add that, as far as my experience extends, my estimate of their discipline is not very high, though I hear of golden opinions which are now being won by the schools lately established by the Girls' Public Day School Company.

Before, however, we enquire as to what this state of discipline should be, and how best it may be obtained, it is necessary for us to have clearly in our minds the objects of discipline. They are, I think, two:—

1. The training of the individual,

2. The maintenance of order.

And whereas the theorist will tell us that the former is the more important, we know very well that in practice it is the latter which we make our primary object; or, to put it more pleasantly and perhaps correctly, the latter, viz., the maintenance of order, will be the object of discipline, while the former, viz., the training of the individual, will regulate the means whereby the discipline is enforced.

In speaking thus I am contemplating large schools, for it is among such that what little experience I have has been mostly gained, and in these absence of order would mean hopeless chaos. In schools of small size more attention may be paid by the teacher to the training of the individual than is possible with large numbers. I do not say that it is so, but I presume it is possible. And do not understand me to mean that the training of the individual is carried out better in a small school—I believe it is very much the reverse; the truth being that the training of a boys lies much