

2. THE ROD IN SCHOOL.

To the Editor of the Journal of Education:

MR. EDITOR,—When I was a boy, in Ireland, I used to get some indelible lessons on the use of this instrument in Irish schools. At times I see in this journal some good articles, quoted from the States, and English lectures. Some regard the use of the rod in schools as a relic of eastern barbarity,—that it is incompatible with American notions of independence, and that it might be entirely superseded by “moral suasion.” But some argue well that it is totally inadequate to maintain order; that it (moral suasion) fosters insubordination to all laws, domestic, civil, moral and divine;—that it is full of affectation,—a mere time-server, placing teachers in the very undignified position of begging obedience.

The object of moral suasion is to induce a refractory boy, already acquainted with consequences, to desist from doing something which I do not wish him to do. Now, it is a primary principle of our nature to not let go a present pleasure without the sure prospect of a paramount pleasure, or that persistence will incur subsequent inconvenience, loss of a better enjoyment, or pain. But, by hypothesis, he knows consequences, and goes on. If he stop by prohibition, the stopping will depend on the person giving the prohibition. He will not stop through fear, since moral suasion does not employ it; then he stops for *love* of me. We are now at the main dependence of “moral suasion”—*love*. Is this love spontaneous in the boy? Does it become active whenever and wherever he sees me? or must I stimulate it by acts of kindness? Have I a faculty of calling up my love whenever necessity presents itself? Am I not as much dependent on him to stir up my love as he is dependent on me to awaken his? And if it were possible for me to call up my love on every occasion, the occasion of a bad boy continually acting contrary to my wishes would undoubtedly be the most unfavorable one. The success of moral suasion depends on the strategem of making him believe I love him, when the fact is the very reverse.

JOHN IRELAND,
Teacher.

3. THE RIGHT HON. ROBERT LOWE, ON COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS.

From a speech recently delivered by Mr. Lowe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, in Scotland, we make the following report:—

In his speech he dilated at some length upon the advantages gained by the introduction of the system of competitive examination into the civil service:—

I do not say, he remarked, that competition will always point out the best person for a clerkship. It is true that it will not, but it has this enormous advantage—it excludes an enormous quantity of incapacity that has hitherto found its way into the public service. No one will hereafter get into the public service without some sort of ability; whereas I have known a gentleman, a most estimable and respectable person, receiving £500 of the public money, and the only occupation we could find that we could possibly put him to was folding up parcels in brown paper, and sealing them, and tying them with cord. Another of its results will be to put at end to a good deal of parliamentary corruption. These places have, hitherto, been largely distributed among members of Parliament in proportion as they supported the Ministers, and re-distributed by them to the electors, in proportion as they gave them their support, and in that way a double system of bribery will be put down, I am bound to say, to the great relief and rejoicing of many members of Parliament, for it will save them a great amount of importunity and trouble. Another immense advantage which it will have, will be the stimulus that will be given to education throughout the country.

Arguing that both schools, teachers, and scholars were stimulated by the encouragement thus held out, he touched upon another point favourable to the new system. The only regret we feel in perusing his remarks, is that all finance ministers are not made of the stern material of Mr. Lowe:

The patronage of public offices has been hitherto in the hands of the heads of the offices, and the heads of the offices are generally very upright and excellent and able persons; but still no man listens with any great reluctance to the proposal to give him a new piece of patronage, and when a man knows he will have to give away a clerkship, he is very ready to believe anybody who says that another clerk is wanted. For that and for other similar reasons, it comes to pass that all our offices are overstocked with clerks, and therefore, the first reform we have to make in this matter, is to improve the quality and diminish the quantity very largely, so that when a man is appointed by public competition, he will have no friends, nobody to wish him to be there unless he does his duty. The consequence will be that the number of *employees* will be reduced, and their quality exceedingly improved.

After referring to the sad war between France and Prussia, Mr. Lowe showed how great an encouragement was given to popular education by the war, through the evidence of the immense value of the intelligence of the German soldiers. Again, a great standing army had been overborne and destroyed by one composed of a nation all trained to be soldiers. “I think,” he exclaimed, “I hear in that the knell of standing armies on the Continent. If they cannot protect the nation against war with such a country as Prussia, whose troops have to be called from the counter, the loom, and the plough, of what use are they? One of the blessings of the abolition of standing armies, he added, was freedom. The sovereign of an armed nation must govern according to their wishes. Again, such an organization was mainly useful for defensive wars.”

4. WHAT EDUCATION SHOULD BE.

Education unaccompanied by moral training, is like a sword in the hands of a madman—and yet grieved as I am to utter it, much of the education of the country is of this sort. The schools of most reputation are eagerly sought—the colleges of richest endowments are greedily visited—knowledge is the cry, while not one thought is spent upon the moral education which may be going on during the acquisition of that knowledge—of the poison that our children may be drinking in—the poison of immorality, of licentiousness, of infidelity. My friends, rather let your children lack the accomplishments of life—than procure them at such a cost. But no schools, however strict the moral discipline, can achieve anything for your children, until you yourselves train them in the homestead, to obedience, to self-government, to courtesy, to virtue. It must be line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little—it must be daily instruction in the word of God—it must be a constant watchfulness over thoughts and habits—it must be earnest prayer for them and with them; and accompanying all this must be a free use of the rod of correction; “for folly is bound up in the heart of a child,” and nothing else can fetch it out. This is education, and it is the want of this which has made our schools and colleges rather engines of evil than instruments of good.

II. Papers on Children and Boys.

1 DO IT WITH YOUR MIGHT, BOYS!

Whatsoever you find to do,
Do it, boys, with all your might,
Never be a *little* true,
Or a *little* in the right.
Trifles even
Lead to heaven;
Trifles make the life of man;
So in all things,
Great or small things,
Be as thorough as you can.

Help the weak if you are strong,
Love the old if you are young;
Own a fault if you are wrong,
If you're angry, hold your tongue.
In each duty
Lies a beauty,
If your eyes you do not shut,
Just as surely
And securely
As a kernel in a nut.

Love with all your heart and soul—
Love with eye and ear and touch;
That's the moral of the whole—
You can never love too much!
'Tis the glory
Of the story
In our babyhood begun;
Our hearts without it,
(Never doubt it)
Are as worlds without a sun!

If you think a word would please,
Say it, if it's but true;
Words may give delight with ease,
When no act is asked from you.
Words may often
Soothe and soften,
Gild a joy or heal a pain.
They are treasures
Yielding pleasures
It is wicked to retain.