

Discipline.



ANY seem to think that discipline is merely the power of keeping order. It is that to a certain extent, but, more important still, it is the art of maintaining diligence and attention to work. Should a class become disorderly, it would only be an outward sign that their attention had already vanished. To keep a class attentive the teacher must have his lesson so thoroughly well prepared that he is able to give some thought to his class at the same time that the lesson is progressing. If a pupil becomes restless and his mind begins to wander from the subject, the teacher should be sufficiently wide awake to observe it. Ordinarily a look, a momentary pause, or a question addressed to that pupil would suffice to recall his thoughts without disturbing the other members of the class.

But should the teacher have to speak a word of reproof the thread of thought would be broken, and this interruption would increase the possibility of the other pupils' thoughts wandering on resuming the lesson.

The teacher should be sympathetic. He should study carefully his pupils so that he might be able to deal with

each one in an understanding way. This individual treatment is conditioned by a number of things. The temperaments of children differ very greatly, and this will necessitate particular consideration and guidance. Also the home training of children differs very greatly, and these differences should be taken into consideration.

Discipline becomes a farce when the teacher is very cold and formal to the children and is thought of only as a punishing machine. School becomes a drudgery to them, and they work only through fear of punishment.

Sarcasm, insinuation and personal remarks should be avoided above all things. Great harm has often been wrought through some bitter sarcasm, or personal remark, made to some extremely sensitive pupil.

The surest test for discovering whether a teacher's method of controlling his pupils is beneficent, is the attitude of the children towards him outside the classroom. If the children shrink from him we may rest assured that his method is not of the best.

In short, discipline is the process by which the individual acquires and develops social self-control.

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