

already hundreds of times, it is due to the fact of our pupils having become less talkative, less turbulent; that they are more attentive, more industrious, more persevering; that they have put themselves under constraint to conquer those faults and inclinations, so natural to their age. If we have practised efforts, so have they, and after all, theirs should be considered before ours, for, on our side, we were assisted both by judgment and reason.

We do not in the slightest degree, pretend to deteriorate from the merit of those teachers who continue to support discipline in their classes, by increased application and labor. Still less should we remain blind to the trouble that they must have in obtaining such a result. That trouble must be immense in the majority of schools, we do not hesitate to speak the word for it truly expresses the case. And here we are led to treat of the last point in this article, though only in a general view, for it is one of so important a character, that we intend very soon to give it our attention in a chapter by itself.

The greatest obstacle towards the maintenance of discipline in schools is owing to the absence of employment with the chief number of scholars. It is an immense obstacle and whatever we have advised, so far, we freely admit falls short of the difficulty.

To fully comprehend the magnitude of this obstacle, it were necessary to be a teacher and have conducted schools; to have seen the masters laboring under the difficulties of their task. To see, in at least four fifths of the primary schools, the master surrounded by some fifty or sixty scholars, from the child who can scarcely speak, not having yet received any culture whatever and who, for the first time, leaves his father's roof and his mother's care and caresses, up to the youth who is just terminating his course of instruction, and is about to select a calling, therefore who demands steadier and more careful tuition; to see him alone, teach all those children differing in age, character, disposition, intellect and even of different sexes; obliged to pass continually from one division to another, from one kind of lesson to another of a different kind, to treat the same subject in several different degrees and ways, according to the age and capacity of his hearers, forced to humble himself with the little, and a few moments later to elevate the same instruction up to a par with the intelligence of the most advanced, torturing his mind to become all to all so as to be within reach of each one even in the same division; constantly pre-occupied not only with what he is saying to those who are listening, but also with what he must next say to those who are in waiting; preparing as it were the second lesson during the delivery of the first: attentive to bring every thing within time's proper limit, and whilst teaching obliged to keep his eye fastened from time to time upon the hands of the clock, because five minutes too many to one lesson are five minutes stolen from the one that must follow, and are so much of weariness to one and of indolence to the other division; then whilst his mind is upon the stretch to explain, to demonstrate, to rebellious understandings, or to follow up the tasks and seize the answers of a group of children so as to check and correct their mistakes, obliged to steal his look around, to lend his ears to the slightest disturbance, to watch over every scholar to the remotest corner of the class, to reprove this one, urge forward another, to answers at his elbow, send that other to his place, to see himself interrupted some twenty times in the space of a quarter of an hour, it were indeed necessary as we have said, to have personal experience of these things or at least have weighed them well to understand them to their full extent.

We repeat that these difficulties are immense, and we should consider ourselves grateful to those who, by dint of intelligence, zeal and devotion to the cause, contrive to

overcome them. But let us not be surprized if the number who do so succeed and in a very imperfect manner be but small, whilst there are many who fail completely.

The great obstacle to the maintenance of discipline lies in the diversity of ages, intellects and degrees of instruction required, because it is almost impossible for one man alone to give occupation at one and the same time to so many scholars, the greater number of whom, are still beginners and therefore incapable of going through any exercise unaided. With this number, lies the great cause of disorder in almost every school, and a most pernicious influence is created over every other member of the class-room.

But how shall we occupy young children who do not know how to read, who are even ignorant of their letters and consider their alphabet-book only as an object for the amusement of their fingers, to twist and tear by bits! When the master has given to these children their hour or half-hour's lesson their share for the day, the question is how to occupy their attention, whilst he attends to the other divisions. We have seen nothing provided to meet this exigency in any of our schools. What is the consequence? Those scholars fall into the deepest weariness and hold school in aversion, and notwithstanding the master's most earnest endeavors and solicitude to the contrary, it will continue to be so considered.

How can a school be expected to progress favorably under such a condition of things. In spite of even the best disposition on the part of the children, their state of idleness, the greater portion of the day will inevitably betray them into the little weaknesses of their age and temperament, they will begin to talk, become restless, tease and annoy each other, stretch themselves on their benches, tables or upon the floor. The master's attention is thereby re-called from another quarter, he stops in his duty to re-establish order here; he scolds, shouts, threatens and chastises; he is obliged to leave his place to come and separate some who are fighting, and to quiet the quarrelsome, or to order others into punishment.

During these moments of excessive noise and turbulence among the younger, the senior ones avail themselves of the confusion to interrupt order in their turn, under the belief that they will escape discovery. Besides, these older ones are seldom or ever occupied as they should be, the first division generally gets enough occupation, but the others are very often without it, or else it is neither sufficiently varied or interesting to fix their attention. Therefore, the slightest interruption to the master is a signal for dissipation among these. Whilst he is busy giving the lesson, he is continually obliged to turn and chide the smaller ones, the others, in the mean time, wait and stand idle, and avail themselves of the opportunity to talk and interrupt order in their turn. Chit-chat and waywardness soon become the practise of the school, and the difficulty and trouble required to reclaim it from this habit is inconceivable.

But what remedy can there be, against inconveniences that are due to the greater portion of the school being left idle and inactive.

One alone, and this is occupation! a due and proper employment of every hour of the time. The system of education should be so organized in our schools, the lessons and exercises so appointed, the scholars so classed, an intelligent selection and division of the duties with such a due and fit attention to time that not a scholar in the class be left one moment unemployed. Setting aside fear, there is no other method known for maintaining discipline in schools and that we know from experience to be quite inadequate, a palliative to the case rather than any thing else.

But how or in what manner shall this constant employment of time be organized, will be asked by the greater number of teachers? They will perhaps add that they have