TO THE COUNTY MODEL SCHOOL STUDENTS.

THIRD ARTICLE.

In this article we shall address you on the subject of "School Management," and shall restrict the meaning of this term to what is usually understood by school government, or the maintenance of proper discipline, without considering it in its broader relation to everything which pertains to the proper conduct of a school.

When discussed from this standpoint, the two main factors to be considered are the pupil and the teacher.

During the past ten years the greatest educational progress has, perhaps, been made along the lines of investigation of what is commonly called the science of education. The teacher has been asked to study mental action, to grasp the underlying principles of education, in order that he may so frame his methods of teaching that they will be in harmony with the natural laws which govern the actions of the mind. Intelligence in the student is aimed at, rather than the imitation of methods, however excellent these may be.

The same practice should be observed in the training of students for successful school management. We aim to teach children in a certain way in order that our teaching may be in harmony with well-defined laws, and we should aim to govern them in the same way for the same reason. A thorough knowledge of child-nature is as necessary in the latter case as in the former.

It has been well said that "we teach the child in a certain way because he is what he is," and the same truth should regulate our management of him. Without consideration of this the teacher is working in the dark, and in trying to govern by arbitrary rules is like a person fitting the body to the dress, rather than the dress to the body.

In order that government of children may be successful it must be in harmony with the nature of children, and due regard must be had to the intelligence and to the motives which stimulate their mental action and influence their conduct.

Writers on this subject usually classify mental phenomena under three headings and in this order: Knowing, feeling, willing, or the intellect, the emotions, and the will. This order is not optional; it is the natural one, and is determined by the relation of cause and effect which exists among the divisions. Our voluntary acts are produced as effects from these antecedent causes working in the order given. We do a certain thing when we have *willed* or decided to do it; our decision to do it was the product of our desire or *emotion*, and the desire was the result of our *knowledge* or expectation of what would follow if the act were performed.

To start from the beginning, we must first *know* what the result of an action will be, we must *desire* the result, and we must *will*, or determine, that the act *shall* be performed, in order that the result may be produced and the desire of the mind or heart—as we say—thereby gratified.

To illustrate: You read in the press of the outrages that have been perpetrated in Armenia, and of the painful distress which has been caused. You feel an emotion of pity, and of a desire to assist in relieving the suffering, and you determine to contribute something towards this end. Your physical act of sending assistance was the result of these three stages of mental action in the order given. If you had not heard of the suffering caused by the cruelty of the rulers, there would have been no pity on your part, and, of course, no determination to assist or sending of aid.

It does not necessarily follow that the first step of knowing must always be followed by the others. There may have been, in your case, the knowledge of the cruelties without any determination to assist, or even any desire to do so; or there may have been the knowledge and an emotion of pity, and yet no will to produce the act of assisting. But what you should note is, that if such an act had been performed, all the preceding conditions, or causes, must have been present. The understanding of this fundamental law gives us a clear conception of what is commonly called the "doctrine of motive," which is really the mainspring of all human action. It influences us in our earliest childhood, and directs and controls us until the end of life.

We cannot, in this article, do more than merely mention a few of the motives which the teacher may place before his pupils for the purpose of influencing their conduct. Different motives must be brought before children of different ages. A child of twelve years of age may be influenced by a motive which would be utterly valueless for a child of five, because the former understands it, while the latter does not. The motive must first appeal to the intelligence of the child, and if it is beyond the intelligence it is useless.

With young children the approbation of the teachers and of parents may always be used as a proper motive. Approbativeness, or the love of praise, is a powerful incentive to action. When you see a modest, sensitive little child leaning its head to one side it is simply saying by its action: "Praise me, and I will do anything for you." The young teacher need not be told that he must be judicious in awarding praise. The child must know that it is merited, and the teacher must remember that a surfeit of anything destroys the appetite. It is better, however, to praise small children too much than too little.

The attainment of an honorable position in the school may also be held out as a motive. To this end a record of the day's work and of the deportment should be made. Change of position in the class, or in the order of seating, will also serve as a stimulus to action, and the change will afford a relief for the sameness which so often wearies children, because it is at variance with their natural instincts.

The gratification of curiosity is, perhaps, the most powerful motive that can be used with small children; and it need not be limited to this class of pupils. Archbishop Whately says: "Curiosity is the parent of attention"; Bacon says it is the "seed of wisdom"; and Hamilton says: "Wonder is the mother of knowledge." The teacher who can arouse the curiosity of his pupils and invoke their own efforts to gratify it—who, instead of telling or doing the work for them, can lead them along, in their natural eagerness for information, to discover for themselves—is the highest type of a teacher. He rewards his pupils with the joy of discovery, and develops a spirit of self-reliance which will, perhaps, be of more permanent benefit than all the information conveyed by the teacher.

With more advanced pupils the perception of utility is, perhaps, the greatest motive which incites to effort. When a pupil comes to see the advantage of his school work, and is filled with ambition or desire to attain a certain end, the teacher has simply to direct his efforts, and has often to restrain rather than to urge. The child's motive power is from within rather than from without.

For the general direction and government of conduct the highest and best motive is the consciousness of right. When this motive is once established among pupils it elevates the whole tone and spirit of the school, and makes school management a very easy matter. It develops self-government, which should be the aim of all discipline, and lays the foundation for future good citizenship.

We have devoted the greater part of our article to the pupil, because we particularly wished you to consider his relation to the subject under discussion, and we can add but a few lines upon the teacher and his efforts to secure good school government.

We would at the outset warn you against giving undue prominence to good order. However necessary, or however indispensable it may be, it should ever be regarded as secondary—as a means to an end. Teaching, which embraces the developing of the powers of the child and imparting instruction, should always be your main purpose. Government is only a means to an end, but it is not the end. Government is for teaching, not teaching for government. Though unusual, it is not impossible to find schools in which there is good government and very indifferent teaching. It is not enough to have a quiet school; there should be a working school, and where there is work and life there must, of necessity, be some noise.

The teacher should aim to secure such order as is consistent with earnest work, but he must not expect absolute stillness where forty or fifty children are at work. Natural activity, the love of change, and restlessness are inherent in children, and to regard these as breaches of discipline is unwise, if not, indeed, an injustice and a positive cruelty to children.

We will close this article by warning you against making the governing power too conspicuous. The most successful