

it. The less of formal command in family or school, the better. Peremptory orders and imperious tones are oftener the marks of weakness than of strength. We all know homes, and probably schools too, in which the language of authority is rarely or never heard, because rarely or never needed. A kind request from those who have the happy faculty of combining firmness with gentleness, is generally more effective than the boisterousness of the loudest blusterer. Moreover, the obedience of love, that which flows from duty and affection, is the only genuine obedience. The reluctant submission which springs from fear is often accompanied with rank disobedience in spirit. There is a wonderful meaning in tones of voice, and the child is an adept in reading it, but the only way for teacher or parent to acquire the right tones is to cultivate the qualities of character which underlie and beget them.

It is wonderful how effective small words and acts of courtesy may be made in business and in social intercourse. They are the oil upon the pivots and bearings of the machinery of civilized life. They sweeten toil, alleviate suffering, and transform duty into pleasure. The tendency of the rush and whirl of this busy age, is too much in the opposite direction. Many business men seem to think they have no time for compliments. Questions are asked and answered in the briefest and bluntest manner. The spirit invades, we were going to say pervades, but we recall charming exceptions—the public offices, insomuch that one of the first things one has often to learn in business or travelling is to expect scant courtesy and often bear with seeming rudeness. The same tendency affects too many of our boys and girls, especially the boys. There are few better services the teacher can render the young, than to lead them, by precept and example, to observe in all their intercourse with one another, those little courtesies and amenities which do so much to reduce the necessary friction and smooth the rough places of even school life. A genuine "please" and "thank you," a hearty apology when needed, and especially the cheerful performance of little acts of self-denial in order to promote the comfort of others, add a wonderful charm to all kinds of intercourse. Not only so but they all, and especially the last-named, are a means of moral education, and a practical working out of the golden rule. Let no teacher think it beneath him to enforce, by gentle suasion, attention to these little but expressive courtesies on the part of those placed under his charge.

#### TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

We call attention to the letter of a "Teacher for Five Years," in this issue. We are inclined to believe that there is too much ground for our correspondent's criticisms and are sure that there is value in his suggestions. The fondness of a few leaders, self-constituted or otherwise, for taking a lion's share of the time is one of the evils under the sun at all kinds of public conventions. Judging from the reports which pass through our hands, Teachers' Associations are by no means the exception which proves the rule.

We seriously doubt the propriety of making attendance at these meetings compulsory. There is, we take it, altogether too much tendency on the part of the Education Office to employ the verb "must" in its administration. It may seem the shortest and easiest way to the desired end, just as the old style use of the ferule or taws on all occasions may seem to the incompetent or lazy the shortest and easiest way to secure order and enforce study in the school room. But in both cases, the longer way round is, in the opinion of the best educators, the shorter way to the true goal. In both cases the old adage about taking the horse to the pond is applicable. It would surely be proof of higher intelligence and ability on the part of the Department of Education, assuming that it has, of right, anything to do with the Associations, to manage to make them so attractive and instructive that teachers would be sure to attend of their own free will, leave of absence being of course secured to them for the purpose.

With our correspondent we doubt very much the value of the "thirty-minute exhibitions," unless in the rare cases in which they are given by educators whose unquestionable talents and success guarantee their fitness to be set up as models. We are sure, too, that there is very much more voting thanks, and administering "taffy" all around than is either in good taste or agreeable to men of real ability.

The list of topics enumerated in the letter is a good one and may be indefinitely extended. Those included in the last sentence are especially worthy of attention. Every teacher should have, or should endeavor to form, a sound and ripe opinion upon these subjects. To this end the freest interchange of thought is desirable. The matured views of the great body of intelligent teachers, in all cases in which those views are pretty well agreed, should prevail with the Department and shape its legislation. It would be a strange thing indeed if the consensus of opinion in a body of well educated, practical teachers, should not be worth more on such points than that of all the officials of the Education Department, the Minister himself included.

But is there any real obstacle to the carrying out of our correspondent's suggestions? Have not the teachers the matter in their own hands? Is there not enough of tact and force in the majority to put down the bores and put up those whom they really desire to hear? Is there any official interference with their freedom in the matter? We ask for information. If, and in as far as the arrangements are taken out of the hands of the teachers and prosy talkers thrust upon them against their will, their rights are infringed upon and the true ends of such meetings lost sight of. We should be glad of a fair expression of opinion on these and all other topics of interest to the profession. It matters not whether we agree with the writers or not. If their communications are written in a proper manner and spirit, we will gladly insert them.

Some teachers are constantly fault-finding. The habit is ruinous to the school. The school is demoralized and the pupils utterly discouraged by the "croaking voice of the continual fault-finder."  
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