

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

READ BEFORE THE KING'S CO. INSTITUTE BY J. W. CAMPBELL.

There is and can be no dispute as to the necessity of rewards and punishments, but there may be a difference in the minds of individuals as to the forms they may take, to the extent they may be carried and to the causes which call for them. Without them there can be no law and they are constantly appealed to by the law of conscience. A school cannot be conducted efficiently without them. In the minds of children the sense of right and wrong are but imperfectly developed and they must feel that there is a gratification in the performance of duty. In order to give them this feeling of gratification they must be stimulated by the hope of reward in some one of its forms. But rewards must be restrained to suit the temper and the physical ability of the children. They must also be kept in their proper place, that is in a place of strict subjection to the higher motives. It would be easy to raise them in the opinion of children so that they would regard them as the end of their conduct. They may be attentive and obedient, but their attention and obedience might be given simply for the hope of gaining some tangible reward. In like manner they might be induced to give their attention or to be obedient from the fear of some threatened punishment. These stimulants are often misused, and it is hard to say which is the most debasing government of a school—by bribery or by compulsion.

Rewards and punishments should be exercised in moral as well as intellectual conduct. But it is too common to confine them solely to the mental ability, thus leaving out of sight the importance of morality in the pupils. Now, in my mind, habits of good moral conduct are of more importance and should stand in a higher estimation with the teacher than the mere intelligent answering of questions. A great deal of discretion should be used by the teacher to determine in which direction the pupil needs a stimulus. Rewards and punishments should be regulated to suit the capacity of the different pupils. A pupil should not receive a reward simply because he outstrips all the other pupils in his class, nor should the others be punished because their intellectual faculties are not so keen as his. The same can be said of the moral side of the question. Some are naturally good, while others have to cultivate the habit of being good. Therefore rewards and punishments should be given according to what a pupil has made himself not according to what nature has made him.

Rewards and punishments may be natural or artificial. By the natural we mean the pleasures or inconveniences which naturally arise from actions. Thus the habit of being truthful in a child gives confidence in his word, while on the other hand falsehood leads us to distrust him. Under the natural may also be included praise and censure.

The artificial are so called because they do not of necessity spring out of the actions with which they are connected. There are two of these artificial rewards in use in schools, viz.: the arrangement of pupils in classes according to their merits, and the giving of prizes. The first of these is by no means essential to the successful management of a school, although it may be used with good effect. Inasmuch as its influence is felt by the whole school it has a decided advantage over the giving of prizes. Prizes are not within the reach of all who deserve them, and only a few of the smarter ones can obtain them. Thus their effect on the class as a whole is lost, for the class soon finds who are the ones likely to obtain them and the remainder give up the contest, thus they tend to discourage competition throughout the class as a whole.

Certificates are another form of rewards in use in schools. If these are modified to suit the

capacity of the school for which they are intended there seems to be no reason why they should not have a beneficial effect on the diligence and good conduct of the school. They are sometimes of a benefit to the holder after he leaves school, to help him get a position in business, and thus they have an important effect upon his future success in life.

Punishments used in schools are of three kinds, impositions, corporal, and expulsion. Impositions are applicable to offences which are incidental to class work. If a pupil comes in late he may be kept in at some of his play hours, but the teacher should always be careful to ascertain to what extent it is the pupil's own fault. Inattention is a fault which may be but a natural weakness in the case of young children. But it sometimes exhibits itself in the case of elder pupils. The teacher should then examine himself and see if it is not in part attributable to his own management of the school. Having satisfied himself that his management is comparatively good he may resort to the private admonition of the pupil, or to giving him a lower place in the class, and, in exceptional cases, he may sit the pupil aside directly under his eye. Imposition may also be practiced in regard to lack of preparation.

Corporal punishment and expulsion should be used only in very exceptional cases; but cases will arise in which they will have to be resorted to for the benefit of the school as a whole. If a pupil is morally bad, and persists in his bad habits after all the milder means have been resorted to, the teacher may use corporal punishment, and if this fails in its object the last means of all, viz. expulsion, must be resorted to in order that the morals of the other pupils may not be corrupted. But all punishments, whatever form they take, should be reformatory, that is, they should seek to reform the wrong-doer. Hence, in summing up we see the propriety of connecting rewards and punishments in regard to the government of a school.

The rewards should be the positive application of the love of activity, love of knowledge, love of approbation and the moral pleasures; the punishments the negative application of the same motives.

CULTIVATING A TASTE IN PUPILS FOR SOUND ENGLISH LITERATURE.

READ BEFORE THE KING'S COUNTY INSTITUTE, BY F. R. CHAPMAN, A. B.

It has been well said that the prime object of education is to make good citizens. So thought our legislators who gave us free schools. Industry, intelligence and morality are of the highest importance. Whatever might be said of the ballads of a country when they constituted the chief literature of the masses, it seems evident now that he who writes the literature of a country need care little who makes the laws.

With many a youth there is no instrument so powerful in forming the character as the reading matter that falls into his hands. It may exert such an influence for good or for evil that unless it be worth reading our labour in his behalf will be worse than useless; for the power that knowledge has given him may be used like a weapon in the hands of a maniac to bring about his own destruction. It will be readily admitted that the mind, like the body, grows by what it feeds on; that the bent given to its early plastic state is the one it is likely to follow in after years; that the boy unconsciously becomes like the hero in the tale which he reads. With regard to the reading of the sensational novel; it will also be admitted that each individual has only a limited stock of energy, and such is the "correlation of forces in man," that the more that is spent in mere *feeling*, leaves so much the less for *thought, will and action*. The "luxury of pity, as an emotion, ending in itself or at best in tears and a

long breath," may be so indulged in as to become morbid, selfish passion, alike degrading and exalting, while the active principle of pity, as a motive to relieve suffering and distress, may be almost wanting.

The work of the teacher is to direct the activities of the pupil in proper channels, so that there may be no waste, but that all his energies may be productive. We should strive to cultivate such a taste for what is pure and elevating on the great "Highways of Literature" that when once on that road the pupil will not turn aside to prey on the worthless garbage of the gutter.

In the few suggestions which I shall make on some of the means of attaining this end, I would say that considering its importance we should make the object itself a *special* one, and then we will, perhaps, find more means at our command than we would have thought possible. In fact the faithful and earnest performance of our duty as contemplated by the course of instruction, will go very far towards securing the desired result.

Our school readers contain a valuable treasury of literature which few, I think, have ever fully exhausted. I would strongly emphasize the point that from the very first the pupil be made to understand every sentence that is read. To secure this, I have sometimes thought it best not to take up every lesson in order as it occurs in the book, when I found one that I considered beyond the capacity of the class. I would further recommend an earlier and more general use of the dictionary than I think commonly prevails. Then, when the pupil fully understands what he reads, (and we can test this by requiring him to reproduce the meaning in his own words, or if far enough advanced, to write abstracts of it), when he has been taught to notice the excellences of thought and style, and has memorized the choice selections of poetry, a great step will have been gained. Other "gems of poetry," not found in the readers, may be written on the blackboard, or given as dictation exercises, and then stored in the memory whence, like household words, they will never more depart.

What a store of noble thoughts and moral precepts can in this way be given almost incidentally. A certain writer, who recommends this practice, says: "The literature of the world embodies a universal moral creed. At the shrine of noble thoughts the devotees of all creeds may bow as brothers." Using these in this way we will be accomplishing a two-fold object. We will be giving instruction in moral actions and habits, and we will be furnishing the pupil with such a draught from the fountain of higher literature as shall produce perhaps all through his life a longing to return to that "old oaken bucket" whose pure waters refresh without intoxicating.

Have we not all felt, as we came in contact with the thoughts of a great author, how

"The tidal wave of deeper souls
Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares."

It is said that the Arabs of old were wont to teach their young the undying thoughts of their poets under the name of "unstrung pearls." Let us follow their example and give our pupils some of the bright gems with which our literature abounds, so that they too will long to become divers in the same great ocean.

Then, again, in the Useful Knowledge Lesson, provision is made for a ground work in Natural Science,—a subject which is justly becoming more and more popular. Pupils when trained to observe and classify objects of the animal, vegetable or mineral world will wish to know more about them and will be in a position to read with intelligence works on these subjects, and acquaint themselves with the wonders of the creation. And this leads me to think of another instrument of great importance—a good school library. Such a library, containing the standard poets, biographies, works on science, travel and fiction, would afford an opportunity for both teacher and pupil to carry out the foregoing hints. But in most districts there is