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HAVE our readers ever noticed that the general behavior of the class reflects the behavior of the master? The former is unconsciously influenced by the latter. Let the master be cheerful and eager, the effect of this is at once apparent in the faces and actions of his pupils; let him be morose and indolent, these will soon communicate themselves to those under him.

NOR is this a trivial matter. Life is made up of little things. The most far-reaching phenomena result from causes apparently unworthy of notice. The older we grow the more this truth is impressed upon us. "Methods," said Talleyrand, "are the masters of masters;" and methods deal solely with little things. The most wonderful book was set letter by letter;—the universe itself, is it not a collection of atoms? Alter one of these, and who can trace the changes? The character of the nineteenth century, Victor Hugo tells us, hung on a single sentence from the lips of a Prussian cow-boy.

SCHOOL-LIFE is made up altogether of little things, and school-life, too, let us remember, is the beginning of the future of every man and every woman, and will in some way shape that future. Influence is as indestructible as matter. We are handling daily forces the measure of which is past our calculation, and the scope of which we cannot comprehend. The association and intercourse with our fellowmen are pregnant with never-dying results over which, when our influence is exerted, we have no control. The association and intercourse with our pupils are even more portentous. We possess responsibilities from which we cannot escape. A strange and profound problem; but as real and as vital as strange and profound.

To go back then, our general behavior in the school room—our manners, our way of treating our children—in a word, our characters as exemplified in our minor acts, are no trivial matter. How many of us look back upon school-life and, with the wider breadth and clearer view that age and observation have given us, have been able to gauge to a certain extent the influence of these upon us? How it was easy to learn under such an one, difficult under such another! How to please this teacher was a joy, to satisfy that one was impossible; and how learning under the one was a pleasure, under the other a toil!

We cannot all have pleasant ways, taking manners. We do not know, some of us, how to deal with children. We make grievous mistakes; we know it; and when alone mourn over it, and, perhaps, envy those who seem gifted above ourselves with judgment and tact. But this in itself, let us remember, this recognition of deficiency and perception of short-comings, is much gained. To see the importance of the manner of our dealings with our pupils, and strive to improve it—what more is required? The effort is everything. Children, let us be grateful for it, are keen in appreciating our attempts at kind treatment, be they never so crude. Unknown to themselves they are ever analysing motives, always tracing actions to their sources. And when they see their master trying his best to act up to the highest dictates of his calm unbiassed judgment they are satisfied.

It is in our ordinary every-day behavior to our pupils that this effort on our part is chiefly visible, and there are numberless ways of showing it.

THERE is another side to this. This care shown in our daily intercourse with those we are teaching is in itself an educating process, and a powerful one. It works silently but surely. Dropping water, we all have been often told, will wear away the hardest rock. As we are, to a very great extent, will our pupils be also. If we are kind and considerate towards them, they will be so towards us; and not only so, but towards each other. And this latter phase of this beneficial influence we can enhance the value of by inculcating principles of politeness. Politeness, if at bottom it is instinctive can be strengthened and formed by habit, just as it can be weakened and lost by habit. We need not to deliver homilies to our pupils on what constitutes politeness and how important it is. It is for us to show them these by example. The teacher is never wholly unobserved. Many eyes are always turned on him, and eyes that are always critical. Older masters—those who have spent many years in the school room—seem sometimes apt to forget this. They become slovenly (if we may use the word) in manner; forgetful of minor niceties of demeanor; careless in treatment. If they had early trained themselves into an opposite course—such as we have been urging—this would be less frequent. Amiability coupled with firmness would be to them a second nature. For these can be cultivated—can be made a matter of habit. Indeed, has not Aristotle told us that all virtue is a habit?

To have occupied so much space in touching upon this side of a teacher's duties needs no apologies. Life in these days is fast. Men in business too often think there is no time for the amenities of life. 'Business is business,' they say, and this generally means that no considerateness is necessary. But there is an ethical side even in trade, though this is unfortunately often forgotten, a fact which the phrase 'business is business' only too plainly shows. Our school children will soon find themselves in this arena, and if they have been trained to a different view of life, perhaps when most of the technicalities of school-training are forgotten, this habit of politeness and consideration for the feelings of others will remain. It will be no little thing gained—rather it will be a great victory for teachers if they succeed in bringing up a generation which recognizes a moral side in every profession, in every trade.

AND this is hardly an idle speculation. Is it not within our powers? What is to prevent its being so? If a pupil from the lowest form in the primary school to the matriculating class in the collegiate institute is continually taught to respect his teacher and behave properly to the boy or girl that sits on either side of him, it is not too bold a prophecy to say that a very appreciable change will come over all trades and all professions.

We have said that there are numberless opportunities of inculcating principles of politeness in the school-room. This is more especially the case upon this side of the Atlantic. The classes are formed of children drawn from very different ranks of society, and possessing very different ideas of manners; and boys and girls are taught in the same room. Both these give ample openings for teaching pupils how to behave one to another.

It is not an easy matter, however, and requires delicate handling. Still we cannot begin too early, and perhaps it is more easily done when our pupils are young and pliable than when character and manner have become formed. The ethical side of behavior should be insisted on. The children could be shown that there was a right and also a wrong way of doing any, even the most trivial action, and that manners were, after all, but the external appearance of the moral nature.

ABOVE all, schooltime is the best of all times in which to learn to act considerately to one another, for there is restraint which adds to care in our demeanor.