

and elevate character, by our instruction and education of the pupil, the question that most readily comes to the lips of the earnest teacher must be, "How can I do my work to accomplish this result? What conditions do I leave unfulfilled?" Perhaps no one thing shows the want of skill in a teacher so quickly as inattention of pupils. Attention is the soul of mental work, and in one phase, that of concentration, is sometimes said to be an indispensable element of genius. "It effects intellectual activity from every direction. It has a strong influence, too, upon the emotional nature, tending to make us forget painful emotion and substitute in its place that which may be pleasurable or beneficial." It can divert us from intense bodily pain when the mind is strongly directed to other things—e.g., the soldier is sometimes not aware of severe wounds until the battle is ended. The mother soon learns to hush her child when it is grieving over real or fancied trouble, by directing the attention of the little one to something more attractive or absorbing for the time. And grown children are not very unlike those of tender years. Crushed by sorrow, or weighted with bodily infirmity, men and women have plunged into the most absorbing, laborious work—work that required constant care or deep thought—and their success is sufficient commentary upon the mental effort made.

Power of attention varies greatly in different individuals. Some possess a certain amount of vivacity in this respect, and can readily turn the mind from one subject to another, but do not perhaps so easily hold the mind upon one thing for any length of time. They lack power of continuity. While the reverse is often true, producing what is sometimes termed absent-mindedness, though that condition or

state of mind is sometimes mere inactivity or dreaminess. Whatever may be the cause of these habits whether natural or cultivated, a strong effort should be made by the teacher to remedy the matter in each case. Constantly demand of the first more sustained effort upon one thing, and give the latter frequent change until he can readily transfer his thought from one object of interest to another. Another quality of attention, one essential to all good mental work, should be secured if possible, in whatever task the pupil is engaged—viz., concentration, or the power of giving one's undivided attention to the work in hand. Many teachers unknowingly cultivate the opposite habit. This can be done by not providing work sufficient in quantity, or of the sort adapted to the child's ability, or interesting in nature. I have known teachers who appeared never to consider that their own manner in the schoolroom might actually prevent continued application on the part of the pupil. A noisy, demonstrative, impulsive, fidgety, scolding teacher never can succeed in keeping pupils busy at their work, either in class or study. One of the best ways to prevent general disorder in a schoolroom, such as whispering, passing notes, loud studying, playing, etc., is to create a sentiment in the minds of the children about one's duty to his neighbor. Continually impress upon the pupils the impropriety and positive unkindness of disturbing others. There will in time, if the teacher himself practises as he preaches, be a sincere regard for the rights of others, and little, if any, need to speak of the offences that make up the aggregate of a teacher's trials. Besides, such pupils have received an impression towards true citizenship that must result in making them better men and women.—*Journal of Education*.