

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.

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By School Discipline, as we intend to discuss it to-day, we mean the maintaining of obedience and order in the school.

So many Utopian theories have of late years, been advanced, that it is dangerous to discuss this subject, or to commit oneself to any system not fully abreast of the enlightened sentiment of the age. A great many of these theories, however, we regard as based on the assumption of a moral perfection on the part of those to be governed, which is scarcely orthodox, as well as a maturity of judgment not supposable in children; and also of a perfection and tact on the part of those who govern, which unhappily, has no existence in fact.

These theories doubtless, originated with the severe and harsh methods of government that have hitherto prevailed, and they have probably done much good in introducing more moderate systems; but they are in danger of bringing about a state of things fraught with far more danger to society, and productive of far worse results than the evils they are intended to remove. They suit well those who dislike discipline of any kind that imposes restraint, and, if acted upon would soon create contempt for all school authority, and render our schools far less efficient, and more difficult to manage.

The practical teacher will find this subject present an almost endless variety of phases that cannot be made to harmonize with any theory. All that can be done, therefore, is to discuss the general principles upon which school discipline should be based, and the details must be filled up by the individual teacher, according to the

circumstances, and exigences of the case in hand.

For the sake of distinctness, we will discuss this subject under two heads, which, for the want of better definition we will call *Discipline by habit*, and *Discipline by command or rule*.

By the first we mean that order and regularity in the school room which is the result of training, and which becomes a habit; or, rather, the course of training which produces that result by patient drill, and constant repetition. We regard this as a very important element in the management of a school. If properly attended to, it would obviate a great deal of that other kind of discipline which is usually regarded as the peculiar badge of the pedagogue profession.

The first thing to be attended to is the teacher's own deportment in school. If he would have a quiet and orderly school, he must himself be quiet and orderly. If he would have the obedience and respect of his pupils, his own conduct must be respectable and consistent. His movements about the school-room; his mode of speaking to the pupils; the posture he assumes before his class; his mode of commanding, reproving, threatening; and the care with which he selects his language in addressing his pupils, will all be reflected with unerring certainty in their speech and behavior. If a teacher is boisterous he will have a boisterous school, if he moves clumsily and noisily about the school-room, he may expect to be constantly annoyed with feet scraping and slate rattling and falling on the floor and if he is in the habit of using slang

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