

where the average duration of school-life is on the increase. Again and again has it been pointed out that the best schools—best in point of numbers, ages, and attainments—are those in which the most labour is bestowed on the middle and lower classes.

Again the substitution of studies which give the children something to learn with their hands for those which merely put into their heads will be found effective in prolonging the stay at school of some who would otherwise early remove from it. Such studies are not only more interesting from making the progress of the scholar depend greatly on his own personal exertions, but they are more stimulating because he has more to show for his work. He can to some extent measure his own progress, and at any time exhibit the result.

If it be not deemed presumptuous, I would offer before sitting down, a practical suggestion for carrying into effect what I cannot but deem the cure of early withdrawal in many cases.

Lancaster was the first to throw it out, and the Sessional School was the first to reduce it to practice. It is to form the school into two divisions, allowing nothing to be taught in the lower, but what has a more or less direct bearing on the children's progress in reading, writing, and arithmetic, to have different grades in the division with a definite work appointed to each, and to exact thorough acquaintance with it, before allowing the child to pass to a higher grade, and no one to be allowed to pass from the lower to the higher division until he can read easy narratives with fluency, to write from dictation correctly, and to work the primary rules in arithmetic. The advantage of this division is, that it sets definite objects before both teachers and children, and thus ensures greater efforts and better results.—*Mr. Gill in Papers for the Schoolmaster.*

2. PUNCTUALITY—ITS FRUITS.

There are few social blessings of greater value than punctuality. There are few social duties the violation of which causes more real and lasting evil. And we may also add there are few qualities that individuals more deeply feel the want of, and the absence of which is more deeply lamented.

As in the first proposition, it is the hinge on which may be said to turn all that includes integrity, stability, and prosperity; so in the second may be said to be involved almost all the constituent parts of good character, whilst formidable barriers are a constant impediment to all successful progress; and in the third we see only the legitimate results of a course of action which no power can entirely prevent, but which may always be proximately but truthfully predicted.

We are all aware of the meed of praise pronounced by the press of this country on the first lady in our land, for her habitual punctuality. Is she going to travel three or four hundred miles? She is ready to start at the moment appointed; and so much has she influenced the managers on the great iron roads, that they bring her to the terminus within a few seconds of the time specified. Has she business of state in hand? We are told that she keeps none waiting, and has produced a salutary fear on all who transact business of state with her, that none will presume to be behind hand in their appointments. Has she, as a wife and a mother, domestic duties which must be attended to, though she be a queen. We learn that never in the history of the court of Britain has there been such an example of domestic purity and household order, as are daily witnessed in the royal palaces of our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria.

We cannot fail to be equally struck at the immense advantage punctual men of business, foremen in the various firms, and heads of households, have over those who are indifferent to the rules of order, and ignorant of the priceless worth of time. Like all other virtues, this one calls forth its various adjuncts, and throws a beaming light upon them, thus setting off, to the admiration of all, what in an opposite character would be hidden, or so neutralized as not to be appreciated.

The sterling honesty of an individual "goes for little;" being clever in penmanship and arithmetic "are not much;" and a pleasing exterior and respectable habits and associations "don't tell" with the men, of whatever grade, whose object is *progress*, if punctuality be not among them. It is a fact of frequent, we may say daily, occurrence, that punctual persons are preferred, with very slender acquirements, to those who are far superior in necessary accomplishments, but who lack this desired qualification.

If we look around us, we find it is the punctual people who get the money, and keep it; who climb up to station and influence, and remain there; who, against all opposition from fashion and indulgence, train their households and dependents to imitate their example, and fail not in sustaining it; and who are the corner-stones that support the great social fabric, and give the surest guarantee for the security of all.

If we look at the evils arising from failure in meeting appointments, we shall find them unsettling and disturbing, if not overthrowing, affairs in all departments of political, business, social, and domestic life. Many a battle has been lost through the non-appear-

ance of some division of any army at the time specified; many a fortune has been missed by not being present at the moment required; many a "good customer" has been lost, and many a good business has been ruined, through broken promises; and many a household is thrown into confusion by the irregular times kept by the heads of families. In all the above cases we see that the results of a violation of punctuality, as a habit, produce real calamities, and such as can scarcely be remedied.

Those who are the subjects of irresolution or indulgence are among the first to lament as well as to see the evils arising from this habit of irregularity, and often promise amendment; but in many cases they "resolve and re-resolve, and remain the same." This habit is not reckoned among the vices, as it is found among the really amiable and excellent as much as among the vicious, so we set it down as an obliquity of character, or as an eccentricity that is not useful. It is oftenest found among those who are styled the "free and easy" sort of people, who have acquired an antipathy against all that appears in their view "cut and dried." Life mapped out in straight lines and squares, and presenting nothing else but the hard lines and acute angles, with no grateful curves, is such an abomination to them, that they prefer being what they are. "Extremes meet," says the old proverb; and it is said by some one, "Virtues may be driven into vices." Some make this principle of action the whole sum of life, and, without making the least apology for irregular habits, it may be said that their driving over everything in their way to keep in their straight line is often to be condemned, for what is gained by the time is lost by the sacrifice of others. In this imperfect state, all cannot run in the same harness, all cannot keep the same pace, and though the loiterers must expect to be left far in rear, there are many who should be helped on, or at least helped out of the way, on the score of willingness and brotherhood. Everything worth acquiring demands patience in teaching, and, for the sake of weaker ones, the stronger may stay a moment, or slacken their pace, without deviating an inch from the line of progress. But punctuality is such an important principle in all the departments of human progress, that its apparent hardness to those who do not study it is compensated by its conservative properties. A rock is hard, and will not give nourishment to the tiniest pretty creeper or flower; but it forms a good foundation, affords a good shelter, and takes a prominent place in the works of nature.

How important is this principle to the heads of families. How highly does a punctual mother estimate it. How much time she saves when meals are commenced at the hours appointed, when all her family are in their places at the morning hour; when family worship has not to be hurried or shortened to make up time; and when there is always time enough to prepare for public worship, and never too late to join in its first exercises. What an advantage to her children. If not aided by her partner, what patience she requires! Let her go on, and keep in the line, gently, kindly teaching him its value, being always ready herself. And if he be not hard as the stone, or blind as a bat in the sunlight, he will be lovingly shamed to follow in her wake, and acknowledge her power by striving to sustain her in her noble course, and by helping her in her arduous and holy duties.—*British Mothers' Journal.*

3. MEANS OF SECURING REGULAR ATTENDANCE.

It is often asked by teachers, how shall punctuality and regularity be obtained in school. The following brief extract answers the question. We have known but few teachers who properly appreciate the influence of their own example in this particular, though its effects are so evident that we do not believe an instance can be found where there was a very marked regularity and punctuality on the part of the teacher that this feature was not also impressed upon the school. Mr. Kingsbury, to whom reference is here made, was for thirty years the principal of a private High School for young ladies, in the city of Providence, R. I. He has recently been appointed Commissioner of Schools for that State, and in a social reunion held at Manning Hall, Brown University, on the occasion of his dissolving his connection with the School, he gave a historical sketch of it, in which he made some excellent remarks on the plan pursued by him to secure punctuality. We extract them from the *R. I. Schoolmaster*, for March:

"An account of every minute's deficiency has been kept, which has resulted in a great degree of success. Many have attended an entire year without one mark against their names, while the marking has been so rigid that if a scholar were half way from the door to her seat when the clock struck she could not escape. A considerable number have attended two years, one three and one quarter years, and another four entire years without a single failure. The teacher has lost at three different times in thirty years, eleven weeks, and has been one minute late, which as he was within the door as the clock struck, he desired to have taken off from against his name."—*Indiana School Journal.*