

the children have had a chance to collect the threads of association which have become snarled during the long vacation, and we shall perceive that they have a good fund of previous instruction. Then, many children have a habit, in all sincerity too, of saying they "never had" whatever they may have forgotten. After making allowances for these conditions, and reminding ourselves that all we have to do is to make the best of the material sent us, we will find that we have more time and strength to spend on the work in hand, than if a portion of both were spent in finding fault with our neighbours.

One of the prominent weaknesses in human nature is antipathy to work, and this of course is found more frequently in the crude human-nature of children. Number three in the inevitables then should be a recognition of the fact that there will always be a certain amount of natural inertia to

be overcome before there is any hope of a hearty response from the children when work is called for. The question therefore is, how to overcome this with least harm to the pupils' mental condition. Shall we threaten or punish, and so leave a disagreeable association to cling forever to the study? Shall we offer bribes to the successful? It would be better to set about the subject scientifically—with the surgeon's lance rather than a club.

First, let us make their feelings our allies by procuring and doing everything possible to make the subject appear attractive, especially to their senses. These feelings will set the will working in the right direction, and thus the first great barrier is broken down. When habits of work are established the wheels will run more smoothly, and we will not have so much to do to keep the attention if once a personal interest is aroused in any subject.

## MORAL EDUCATION.

THE subject of moral education in the public schools is at present enlisting more attention from teachers and the educational conventions than almost any other subject which comes before them for discussion. Rightly or wrongly, it is held by many that, whatever is to be said of the intellectual training given the boys and girls in the schools, the moral training given, the influence of the system upon character is inadequate. How shall morals be taught in the schools? How shall we give the young people stronger and better wills and higher motives?—are questions constantly asked. As in the case of some other questions often asked nowadays in connection with the public schools and general education, no little con-

fusion and misapprehension result from many of these discussions of morals and moral training. Many of them have been directly connected with the discussions of religious teaching in the schools; and many advocates of a kind of religious teaching in the schools which most good people in America deem unwise are rather eager, in their insistence upon the necessity of religious teaching everywhere and always in order to good conduct, to paint the moral condition of the schools and the problem of moral education vastly darker than there was any ground for. The moral condition of the public schools, so far as their own *régime* goes, is almost invariably better than ever before in the history of the public