

Pleasure *in posse*—probable pleasure—is an inferior motive to actual pleasure. If there is a strong probability of pleasure to be soon experienced, the will may be exercised to a considerable degree, but if the prospect of pleasure is far distant the influence is generally slight.

Pain, instead of attracting, repels us. How then does it act as a motive? When pain ensues on neglect of or departure from the prescribed task, we find pleasure by sticking to it. On this principle we punish our pupils for want of application. Pain, as a motive, is inferior to pleasure, and should only be employed when other motives will not operate. Pain in any degree is a waste of brain power, and when it passes into dread or terror a great evil is inflicted. The teacher who is for ever scolding and pestering his pupils has much to answer for. To demand some difficult task of a timid child, and, at the same time to frighten it with a threatened penalty, is to demand an impossibility, and the teacher has made it an impossibility. To set a task with the penalty of corporal punishment in case of failure attached, is, first, to incapacitate the child, and next, to punish the child because you have succeeded in incapacitating it. Perhaps the use of the tawse might be justified under such circumstances, but certainly not if applied to the child.

There are cases, however, in which the teacher must resort to pain. We sometimes find that a pupil considers he has mastered a subject, when the fact is, he has only a very elementary knowledge of it. What must the teacher then do but take some of the conceit out of him—always a painful operation to submit to. The pupil must be puzzled that his eyes may be opened to his ignorance. But the end should be such as to justify the means. We should resort to heroic remedies only when milder ones will not meet the case.

When all the mental powers are for a time absorbed on an object or exercise, an expenditure of brain energy is taking place, and, after a time, there must be an intermission. The maximum of mental energy cannot be long maintained. In view of this fact, is it a wise provision of our school law, which makes the time of teaching between five and six hours a day? I think that for young pupils, at any rate, the time is too long. The younger pupils in our public schools do no more work than, perhaps not as much as, they could do in half the time, with frequent intermissions of work and play. The young mind is incapable of continuous concentrated application for an hour and a half at a stretch, and it is folly to pretend to exact it. Let any teacher observe how little of their time the minds of his pupils are wholly absorbed in their tasks, and how much of it, so far as acquisition is concerned, is practically wasted; and I believe he will become an adherent of the view here expressed. Unsettled, desultory work is not very productive, and we are sure to have a good deal of such work so long as our working hours remain as at present.

Relief may be given to the mind by a judicious alternation of studies. No study is so many-sided as to make equal demands on all our energies. It is a relief to pass from exercises which are entirely new and strange, to others already familiar, but, which require additional practice, in order to engrain them on the memory. Transition from the abstract to the concrete also affords relief. The whole attitude of the mind is different when engaged on arithmetical problems from its attitude when engaged in a reading or writing exercise. The change from language to a constructive exercise, such as drawing, would be an effective one for rest.

It has been already stated that pleasure in the work is the chief attracting motive to concentration. How then can the teacher get his pupils to love their work? In the first place, the teacher must love the work himself; this implies a thorough mastery of the work. Enthusiasm begets enthusiasm; if the teacher be thoroughly

earnest and enthusiastic, provided always that he possesses tact and good judgment, his pupils will not long remain uninterested. The teacher can also create an interest on the part of his pupils by telling them enough to awaken their curiosity. When the wonder of a child is aroused good results are likely to follow: the object of his curiosity will probably be examined.

Again the teacher must not give too much, and must not go too fast—must never give an overdose and must give time to digest.

Further, the teacher may lay before the child certain facts pointing to a conclusion, and allow the child to draw the conclusion. The pupil by doing this himself, instead of having it done for him, gains a sense of his own power—always a pleasurable feeling. In this way, too, personal independence is fostered.

Judicious praise on the part of the teacher may give encouragement and may stimulate to further exertion; but the teacher must be judicious in his bestowal. He must guard against ministering to the child's vanity, as well as against arousing the jealousy of his class-mates.

SOCIABILITY.*

One of the conditions of our happiness, almost of our existence, in this world is congenial society. No more dreadful punishment has ever been inflicted upon criminals than solitary confinement. No man, however wicked or hardened he may be, can long bear to be shut out from the sound of the human voice, the touch of the human hand or the sight of the human face. Experience has taught many a prisoner that the harshest tones, the most forbidding countenance and even blows or stripes are preferable to complete, enforced solitude.

There have been in former days, and in rare instances there are still, some who have voluntarily renounced the society of their fellows and devoted themselves to communion with Nature and Nature's Author. To them the flowers and the trees, the birds and beasts, the waving corn and the scented hay, the freshness and life of early morning, and the dewy stillness of the evening, the howling tempest and the cooling breeze supplied the place of the love and companionship of wife, brother, sister and friend. They were therefore free to devote themselves to study, to meditation and to devotion.

At first thought one would imagine that circumstances would be singularly favourable to these recluses, that being freed from the toils and cares, the annoyances and interruptions as well as the temptations and passions of active life they would accomplish much work and obtain such communion with the unseen as is denied to those whose ears are always filled with the jarring noises of a troubled world. And yet we do not read that these hermits were among the great benefactors of our race. They, no doubt, had their work to do, and they did it faithfully and self-denyingly. But it was not the *greatest* work. They were rather copiers or preservers of what had been done by others than creators themselves.

All the great teachers of mankind have been those who shared in the struggles, the cares, the joys and sorrows of those of their generation. Many a time it has seemed to them that the stress and turmoil and trouble around and within them had robbed them of their inspiration, but made the stronger by that very discipline they have returned to their work with new vigor and have succeeded the better for the struggle.

Do you want instances? Take that of Him who sitting on the Mount of Olives, sharing the labors of the fisherman of Galilee, surrounded by the hungry multitude in the desert, in the temple,

* Abridged from a paper read before the Charlottetown Teachers' Institute by Miss Maria Lawson.