

of the parent, the disgust and abhorrence of the good, and the contamination if not the ruin of those coming under its influence. As the result of this, too many fond mothers have died broken-hearted; the gray hairs of too many venerable sires have been brought down with sorrow to the grave; and too many promising youths have been ruined, to justify an attempt at enumeration.

I will now leave this part of the subject, with one remark. It may be said by some that the cases above given are overdrawn, the evils exaggerated; but after duly contemplating the workings of evil among men, and the laws of cause and effect, the assertion will not be repeated, but rather the reverse.

Thirdly. Let us now consider the Remedy or Remedies.

It will be seen at a glance, and doubtless conceded by all, that the only successful remedy is the *removal of the cause*. For so long as this exists the effects will follow; and any counteracting influence brought against them will be in the main unsuccessful. Therefore, the proper and momentous question for consideration is, How may irregularity of attendance and tardiness be prevented? Stimulated with the desire to accomplish what good I can in the cause of education, I attempt an answer.

There can be no *perfect* remedy, or rather preventative, so long as children are under the control of persons who are so ignorant or bigoted as not to be made to see their errors, or so deficient in moral principle or force of character as not to reform when they do see them; nor, again, so long as circumstances may, and will unavoidably exist, rendering it *impossible* to prevent these evils, even though the minds of parent and child may be right upon the subject.

I am prepared confidently to assert that in nearly all cases these painful evils may be either removed or effectually prevented. To accomplish this, several things are necessary.

1. The most important of these is, to *change the public mind* on this subject. The parent must be made to feel that the *destiny of the child* for time and eternity is involved in the matter of education. This same interest should exist in the minds of *all* parents. To accomplish this the teacher should visit them and present the matter to them in its proper light. But, as many teachers feel incompetent to do this work, another method should be adopted, viz: In every county an efficient educationalist should be employed to lecture upon this subject (and others), and awaken a general interest in education. Such a plan would soon entirely change the character of our schools, and the expense would be trifling compared with the benefits, especially if the child's time is money.

2. Another partial remedy consists in creating such a sentiment and interest in the mind of the scholar that nothing but absolute necessity can detain him from school. Much of this may be accomplished by the agency already mentioned; but, to this may be added the joint effort of both parent and teacher, especially the latter. Let him, by familiar lectures and other suitable means, impress and inspire his pupil with a sense of the value and availability of knowledge in every department and condition of life, and especially of the momentous interests that may be 'wrapped up in each moment'.

3. To add to the efficiency of the above-mentioned agencies, the teacher, by regularity, punctuality and economy, must make the *proper improvement of time* the one idea of his being. It needs no argument to show that if this is not the case, all his efforts against these evils will be of little avail.

4. Another effectual remedy would be, The Almighty Dollar; for instance, let each township appropriate a certain prize-fund to be awarded annually or otherwise to that school which, in proportion to the length of the term and the number of scholars, shall exhibit the greatest average of attendance per day; one-half of said sum to be paid to the teacher, and the remainder to be expended for school-apparatus or suitable reading-matter. Again: Let each county that has a school-fund adopt the same plan. In addition to the above, let a similar fund be appropriated to that district which with the least number of scholars shall exhibit the greatest total number of days' attendance per year.

5. Also, the school should be supplied with a clock, which, by the *special care* of the teacher, should keep exact and uniform time, and this should be the standard for the district.

6. Again: Since many families have not good time-pieces, and others who have allow them to become irregular by their negligence, every school-house should be supplied with a bell, sufficiently large to be heard in all parts of the district; and then let this be rung at a precise time before the commencement of the school; thus the children can be punctual (impossibilities excepted) if so disposed. Having realized the salutary effects of such an arrangement, I can not recommend it too highly; and in reply to the objection of expense I will only say that it needs not the eye of the philosopher nor the reasoning of the logician to discover that

the benefits of such an arrangement to the community would prove a handsome percentage on the necessary outlay.

And I will add that, while parents are doing so much to make their homes comfortable and pleasant, if they would endeavor to make the school-room, which is in part the nursery of the child, duly attractive, the child would be more interested to be there.

7. Again: Let a regulation be adopted and enforced in each school by which if a scholar is absent he shall afterward bring an excuse from his parents, and a certain number of absences unexcused shall forfeit his connection with the school for the remainder of the term.

To this may be added another, by which if scholars are not present at the hour of commencement, they shall be excluded for all or part of the rest of the day, and their cases specially reported to their parents.

Rules similar to these have been adopted in many schools, and with good success when the parents have been in sympathy with them.

8. And finally: The teacher may in a multitude of ways operate against these evils; as, for instance, by keeping a list of absences and also of tardiness, and at the close of the school making a present to the scholar having the fewest number of either.

And now, kind reader, after having taxed your indulgence so long, I leave you, with a single remark. If, from what has been said, the task of removing these evils appears difficult, remember there is no excellence without great labor.—*Illinois Teacher*.

(From the Indiana School Journal.)

School Visitations.

No complaint is more common from teachers, than that "parents will not visit the school." Every teacher knows the great influence of parental visits upon the general interest of the school: hence he feels an anxiety to have what he rarely gets. "How shall I get parents to visit the school?" is frequently asked; "not one has called during the quarter." And one principal of a Seminary stated publicly, on examination day, that not more than three parents had visited it during the year.

The indifference of parents and citizens is a great fault, and much to be regretted, and teachers should set themselves to work to change the habit. The question, is asked, *how* can it be done? Like everything else of importance, by hard work and well directed skill.

Experience of some ten years in Public Graded Schools proves to me that the thing is not only possible, but comparatively easy to be attained.

When anything is to be brought about, a teacher should lay his plans carefully, and when formed, steadily execute them.

First, a teacher must waken up his scholars, excite them in their studies, and get up a pride for the school. If he cannot do this, he can never reach the community, and had better give up all hopes of success.

If he can succeed in arousing the ambition and energy of his pupils, he may feel confident of succeeding in getting out the parents. After the teacher has created interest among his pupils, let him see the directors and some other prominent men in his district or town. Let their promise to be present at school on an appointed day, invite every parent that he sees to visit the school at that time, give general notice to the scholars that directors, clergy, and parents are coming. Let them be prepared with extra exercise of interest, brisk and varied, such as declamations, concert recitations, and readings, mental arithmetic or geography, and whatever else the age of the pupils will admit of. When the time comes, go through with all the exercises that were prepared. Some will be present, perhaps but few, but a beginning has been made; you have set the people to *talking about the school, favorably*. Appoint another day for similar exercises, and urge all to be present. You have but to tax ingenuity to vary the exercises, and the skill to interest pupils, to secure the attention of every parent.

The teacher who never or rarely sees parents in school, may charge himself with 95 per cent. of the blame for it, and has only to try the experiment suggested, to be convinced of the fact. But few parents will attend merely from a sense of duty. They must be *interested* when they visit, and when pleased, they will not fail to attend, and induce others to accompany them. To teach an efficient school, requires energy, skill, and learning. These, properly directed, will enable any one of ordinary perseverance to succeed; without them, he ought not to engage in a work so important, involving the present and future interest of immortal beings. J. H.