

If a teacher had no other amiable trait of character, but only this one, of forbearing to taunt, or ridicule, or triumph over his pupils when they are suffering, there is no doubt that this solitary virtue would of itself endear him to every one of them.

Should you chance to become acquainted with the secret hopes of a child, with any of his little projects which will not bear rough treatment, you ought by all means to keep the knowledge to yourself. To expose them to others in his presence, when he is labouring under excitement of an unpleasant nature would be a betrayal of confidence, which must disqualify you ever afterwards from holding any but the humblest place in either his affections or his esteem.

IV.

Patiently listen to a child while he makes his excuse: no matter how fully you are convinced of his faultiness, or how absurd the excuse may appear, hear him to the end, and then, by a word or two, show him the weakness, or the falsity of his plea. In this manner you may check the ugly habit some children have of accompanying every admission with such phrases as, "I could'n't help it," or some more finished apology.

But persons who think this too tedious a method sometimes take a shorter course. Having made up their minds beforehand, they stop the child in his story, by saying, "You are a liar" or "That's a lie. (The latter indeed is the favorite form of expression.) These and equivalent phrases have recently appeared in some schools, from which, it is unnecessary to say, they should be banished at once and forever.

V.

Children will take advantage of any trifle that gives them an opportunity of speaking to the teacher upon out-door affairs: and they are likely, if not carefully trained, to make some answer to every enquiry rather than remain silent, and not gain his notice. When information is sought openly of the pupils, and each one is permitted to speak aloud what he has to say on a certain point—as for instance, the cause of a particular child's absence from school, or the order of others when going home, it is astonishing how many reckless and contradictory statements are put forward. The importance of this matter is very great. They should be encouraged to speak the truth, and the strict truth, and cautioned against saying anything of which they are not sure, or repeating hearsay accounts.

VI

Children seem willing enough to tell truth, so willing indeed, that on some encouragement they will tell almost anything they know, however uncomplimentary or inopportune. If any of them place you in an uncomfortable position by revelations touching yourself, you ought, for your own sake, to listen to the tale with temper; and when he tells the story clumsily, and you see necessity for setting him right, offer your explanation mildly. Persons who love truth are zealous for it on its own account more than from personal motives; and were you to bully, or fly into a passion of anger on such an occasion you would expose yourself to suspicion of a desire to suppress truth.

Take care you do not give your pupils grounds to believe that your search after truth always takes a left hand turn—that the tendency is ever to make the children appear in error. When in that way a teacher attempts to

degrade truth, the phrase, "Tell the truth, tell the truth," which he constantly uses, becomes in his mouth the veriest cant, and conveys no other meaning to the child than this: "Acknowledge that you alone are to blame; admit that you are altogether in the wrong."

It would be surprising, if children loved the name of Truth, whilst she invariably presents to them this forbidding aspect.

Whilst using your best efforts in the interest of truth, you will not overlook a fault common enough amongst teachers, viz., the fault of exaggerating or magnifying the errors and omissions of those under their care.

For example, a boy comes into school at forty minutes after ten o'clock in the morning; the teacher asks him this question, "What kept you till eleven?" Again, a child speaks somewhat too loudly and the teacher inquires, "Who is that roaring?" those things cannot be set down to a careless habit of speaking—carelessness is as likely to underrate as to overrate; they are, it is to be feared intentionally incorrect, and no doubt, have a very bad effect on children. Beginning by imitating the teacher in this, the pupils acquire the habit of singling out the annoying circumstance of an action, the petty defect of a person, of dwelling on these, and making them the subjects of their common conversation—a detestable practice.

Some teachers have a reckless random way of speaking to, and before their pupils; and when attempts are made to point out to them the impropriety of so doing, they, for the most part, reply that they were paying very little attention to their words at that time, or that they had no harm in it; and they appear to think that such an explanation frees them from all blame.

It is not for the value of the information it contains that this extract from one of Miss Edgeworth's admirable little books is inserted. but because it directs attention to some of the primary obligations of a teacher, viz: (1) Never to break his word, or (2) make an engagement he cannot perform, or (3) lay claim to knowledge he does not possess. The easy manner in which the subject is treated will, it is hoped, form some excuse for the length of the passage.

"Frank's father was very careful always to keep his promises. He remembered that he had promised Frank, that whenever the brewer came, he would let Frank see how beer was brewed. The brewer was now going to brew..... 'You see Frank,' said his father, 'that this liquor in these vessels is not like what you saw in the brewhouse. It is however, the same liquor, but it is now in a state of fermentation.

"'It looks, indeed, quite different,' said Frank; 'that liquor was of a dull brown color, and quite smooth on the surface; this is all frothy, and a muddy yellow and white color. It is full of bubbles, some rising from below the surface, and others bursting.'

"That froth is called yeast, or barm; and it is by means of this yeast, or barm, that bread is made spongy and light. Bread made without barm is heavy, like unbaked paste." "How is beer made to work, or ferment, as it is called?" "Some yeast that was got from other beer that was fermenting, was put into this beer, and that set it a working, as it is called," "How does it set it a working, papa?" "I do not know, answered his father. "How did they get yeast for the first beer that was made to ferment?" "I do not know, answered his father. "Why, papa, I thought you knew everything." "Indeed, my dear, I know very little, and I never pretend to know more than I do. The older people grow, and the wiser they become, the more they feel that they are ignorant of a number of things. Then they become desirous to learn; and the more they learn, the more pleasure they feel in acquiring fresh knowledge!"