

sible conditions. We think of Napoleon Bonaparte as a colossal monster of will power, and truly enough he was so. But from the point of view of the psychological machinery it would be hard to say whether he or Gladstone was the larger volitional quantity; for Napoleon disregarded all the usual inhibitions, and Gladstone, passionate as he was, scrupulously considered them in his statesmanship.

A familiar example of the paralyzing power of scruples is the inhibitive effect of conscientiousness upon conversation. Nowhere does conversation seem to have flourished as brilliantly as in France during the last century. But if we read old French memoirs we see how many brakes of scrupulosity which tie our tongues to-day were then removed. Where mendacity, treachery, obscenity, and malignity are unhampered, talk can be brilliant indeed; but its flame waxes dim where the mind is sicklied all over with conscientious fears of violating the moral and social proprieties.

The teacher often is confronted in the schoolroom with an abnormal type of will, which we may call the "balky will." Certain children, if they do not succeed in doing a thing immediately, remain completely inhibited in regard to it; it becomes literally impossible for them to understand it if it be an intellectual problem, or to do it if it be an outward operation, as long as this particular inhibited condition lasts. Such children are usually treated as sinful, and are punished; or else the teacher pits his or her will against the child's will, considering the latter must be "broken." "Break you child's will, in order that it may not perish," wrote John Wesley. "Break its will as soon as it can speak plainly, or even before it can speak at all. It should be forced to do as it is told, even if you have to whip it ten times running. Break its will, in order that its soul may live." Such will-breaking is al-

ways a scene with a great deal of nervous wear and tear on both sides, a bad state of feeling left behind it, and the victory not always with the would-be breaker.

When a situation of the kind is once fairly developed, and the child has become all tense and excited inwardly, nineteen times out of twenty it is best for the teacher to apperceive the case as one of neural pathology rather than as one of moral culpability. So long as the inhibiting sense of impossibility remains in the child's mind he will continue unable to get beyond the obstacle. The aim of the teacher should then be to make him simply forget. Drop the subject for the time, divert the mind to something else, then, leading the pupil back by some circuitous line of association, spring it on him again before he has time to recognize it, and as likely as not he will go over it without any difficulty. It is in no other way that we overcome balkiness in a horse: we divert his attention, do something to his nose or ear, lead him round in a circle, and thus get him over a place where flogging would only have made him more invincible. A tactful teacher will never let these strained situations come up at all.

You perceive now, my friends, what your general or abstract duty is as teachers. Although you have to generate in your pupils a large stock of ideas, any one of which may be inhibitory, yet you must also see to it that no habitual hesitancy or paralysis of the will ensues, and that the pupil still retains his power of vigorous action. Psychology can state your problem in these terms, but you see how important she is to furnish the elements of its practical solution. When all is said and done, and your best efforts are made, it will probably remain true that the result will depend more on a certain native tone or temper in the pupil's psychological constitution than on any-