

himself doing the work through a faulty agent, but in changing the agent. If he cannot rely, he should relieve. At all events, he should so far presume upon the intelligence of his teachers as to free them from the feeling that they are set to do another's work in a way marked out by another's will. There are matters of form, mechanical in their very nature, in the attention to which the teacher may safely follow explicit directions; but one way is open, and no opportunity for choice can be given. These matters are, however, the least important of all. In the great work of the teacher,—the building up of the character of the pupil, and the fashioning of his style of thought,—there is ample opportunity for the exercise of diverse gifts; occasion for the use of individual power; ample field for the cultivation of the freedom of the teacher. No superintendent can afford to sacrifice the freedom of the individual teacher. He may counsel, but not direct; he must lead, but not control, except in that indirect way which is the outgrowth of a marked superiority. He who has the broadest views of the work of supervision will most surely exercise trust in the discretion of his teachers. He recognizes the possibility of different routes to the same end. He knows that variety in means best suits varying ability, and that freedom in the line of earnest service secures the best results. Hampering teachers with minute details as to the method of work, frets and hinders rather than helps. Manifest suspicion of indiscretion increases the probability of its existence. Trust encourages effort, and helps to establish proof of its worthy bestowal. It may be misplaced, but the remedy is simple a teacher who fails in discretion, after full opportunity for its free exercise, should not be left to trouble the superintendent, and to stand in the way of one capable of better service. But too hasty judgment is to be deplored; hence,—

3. *Patience is requisite.* The best service possible to a teacher is not always apparent upon first trial, nor in the first place obtained. It is unwise to condemn after the first failure; it may result from a mistake which in another and similar case may be, will be, corrected. Circumstances may be unfavorable, and an entire change will show that the failure was not in the teacher, but in her surroundings. There are those whose natural strength will carry them through all trials; others need such assistance for a time as favorable surroundings may furnish. With some there is a consciousness of power; with others, the power, but not the consciousness, exists. To the latter the encouragement of success, found by the application of the power to some slight resistance, develops the consciousness, and secures good results. With some, the power is yet in its germ, and needs the sunshine of a smile, the rain of kind advice, for its full development. Some of the best teachers of my acquaintance have been spared through the patience of their superiors. But patience "may have her perfect work," and forbearance may "cease to be a virtue;" still conscious inability will honor the superintendent's decision. His patience will not be simply enduring, but active in correcting faults with which he bears, and mercy will temper.

4. *Justice in dealing with the faults of his teachers as well as in his estimate of their merits.* Overpraise, misapplied praise, are as unjust as unmerited censure. In any body of teachers no one can monopolize all the excellences. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend;" they are the wounds made by a skillful surgeon, not to hurt, but to heal. To withhold friendly criticism and then to visit judgment for faults which might have been corrected, is the rankiest injustice. Such a course assumes that the teacher is conscious of her faults and willingly perpetuates them. If such wilfulness leaves no ground for assuming, but actually proves its existence after proper admonition, there is but one course for justice to pursue, and the guilty one will assent. If to the superintendent's human nature some favorites be essential, let them be selected from those

who have "organized victory" for themselves, who have come up "out of great tribulation." Such will have the good sense not to be damaged by favoritism. Better still, if he can so far overcome human frailty as to be the *fast* friend to merit wherever found, the *faithful* friend to faults in whomsoever they exist. Justice withholds not merited censure, confers not unmerited praise.

Frequent opportunities will be given for acting the part of a wise and just mediator between teacher and parent. In no other part of the superintendent's work will he need greater discretion. To make both parties, in a conflict of opinion, feel that he is a true friend whose decisions will always be just, demands experimental knowledge of the position held by each. One who has been a teacher, and who is a father, is best prepared for such a demand. A teacher's vocation inclines to self-assertion. A parent's love blinds him to the faults in his own children, even if it magnifies not the faults in those of others. An opinionated teacher, and a blinded parent, being given the conditions, are highly favorable to a first-class controversy. An *ex parte* hearing of such a case but widens the breach, and a hasty decision made upon the application of either party lays the superintendent liable to the charge of injustice. Let both sides be heard, and the point at issue be divested of all misunderstandings, and the case will settle itself to the satisfaction of both. My experience has convinced me that most controversies, cleared of all misunderstandings, are reduced thereby to a compass so small as to shame those who persist in attempting to stand upon it. The wisdom of the superintendent will be seen in curbing the teacher's vanity, and in curbing the parent's blindness.

Enough has been said indirectly, in previous articles, upon the need of a watchful eye over the interests of pupils in the hands of teachers who may be just with the best of motives. Self-interest sometimes may underlie great devotion to the interests of pupils. The system of grading teachers upon percentages obtained by their pupils is liable to gross abuse. It may be of use for purposes of private counsel, but unjust when made a basis of public award. There are many elements beyond the mathematician's determination which utterly destroy the value of his results. Another source of injustice is found in the publication of a list of promotions of pupils within some specified time, unless the time cover a period sufficient to permit the elimination of all temporary, incidental influences which may favor or retard the moving forward of pupils, with due regard to the mutual obligations of teacher, pupil, and parent, the superintendent will cherish.

5. *A spirit of helpfulness.* The larger experience can always be helpful in ways that will not abridge the freedom of the less. The work of instruction is shared by superintendent and teachers. He, the controlling spirit,—they, the active participants; he, the general,—they, the rank and file. Any corps of teachers is the stronger for their reliance upon their leader. His spirit of helpfulness will beget in them a spirit of comity, which shall bind them to their work as it attaches them more firmly each to the other. If a superintendent will lead, show confidence in, have patience with, be just to, and wisely help his teachers, he will find through their hearty co-operation assured success. Their obedience will be more cheerful as they recognize the ability of their leader. Their discretion will grow with opportunities for its exercise. Their shortcomings will be lessened through the notice taken of their good qualities, and the friendly overlooking of their faults. Reproof, even, will be the more welcome if they find their deserts are recognized. Their weakness will be made strength by timely assistance. The superintendent does his best work through devoted co-workers: devoted not to him, but to the work he is set to supervise.—*New England Journal of Education.*