

PAPIER LU A LA CONVENTION DES INSTITUTEURS, PALMER ROAD PAR M. ISIDORE BUOTE, INST.

DISCIPLINE AND GENERAL METHOD IN TEACHING.

Mr. President, Revs. Fathers, Ladies & Gentlemen.

In the paper which I am about to read, I will endeavour to offer a few suggestions in respect to the general method of teaching in our primary schools.

It is almost unnecessary for me to say that the first and most important factor in connection with our schools is the teacher. Next come the pupils and parents. The teacher must know thoroughly the subject he undertakes to teach. The more he knows the better fitted he is for being an instructor of youth. In making these acquisitions, however, the young teacher must guard himself against the mistake of many of our students, of putting quantity for quality. It is not the amount of one's knowledge which makes him an educated man. A man may have a smattering of almost all learning, and yet may not be so wise, as he who knows but one subject, but knows that subject well. While, therefore, the teacher endeavours to acquire as much knowledge as he can, he should endeavour to acquire it in an orderly systematic manner.

Let each new acquired fact be connected with facts previously acquired, and put in its proper place, so as to be within call when wanted, and thus all his knowledge will be serviceable to him. A teacher should study and study always.

Flushed with success at coming off a first class man at a licence examination, and being engaged in a school in a rural district, where the incentives to study are few, the young teacher is, sometimes, apt to imagine that he has no more occasion to study. Vain imagination! The moment he has come to the conclusion that he has nothing more to learn, it is high time for him to give up teaching. Each day's lesson, however simple, will require more or less study and no teacher should appear before any of his classes without careful preparation. It is not only necessary to a teacher to have knowledge; he must also know how to impart it to his pupil, and in order to do this successfully he must have a thorough knowledge of children. For this purpose he must study their dispositions, their temper, and their habits. He must be able to put himself in their position. See their difficulties, rejoice in their joys, and sympathize in their sorrows. Let no teacher imagine that being childlike is childish. He must retrace his steps, one by one, until he comes down to the child waiting below, then taking him by the hand, he will guide him up, one step, then another, until he reaches the top. The teacher should be patient, capable of commanding his temper. In a school there is much to try his patience, and temper. He has sometimes to contend, against much ignorance and obstinacy. Frequently he will find that after explaining a subject with much care, he has to begin anew and explain again. Frequently he will find his forbearance requited by ingratitude, his love returned by ill-will. But amid all these trials he must never lose self command. The moment he does so his power is gone. This leads me on to discipline in the schools. The object

of discipline is to accustom the pupils, to order, obedience, and application, which are the general condition to the success of teaching. I will endeavour to make a few suggestions, which I think will tend to promote the order of discipline. A constant and watchful superintendence of the child will do more to promote the discipline of the school than the most severe punishments. The child when in school is more or less under the master's eye, and whatever may be his propensity to mischief, he will not likely indulge in it so long as he feels he is observed. But if the restraint be removed the pupil will give way to his natural feelings, and instinct of his heart, and will stand forth in his real colours. Now if the play ground be not carefully superintended by the teacher, it will give the boy the opportunity of exhibiting and calling into action his bad qualities. On the other hand if the play-ground were duly watched over by the teacher when possible, his presence would tend to check the exhibition of what was wrong. Although no master can drive out evil thoughts and action from a boy's heart; yet his presence would prevent these thoughts from embodying themselves in public acts of wrong. But one might say that this were merely damming up the stream and leaving the fountain still full and welling up. To a certain extent this is true, but yet the very acts of preventing evil deeds tend to weaken the power of evil thoughts.

Discipline is also promoted by good organization. The prevalence of order or confusion in a school may be taken as a test of the organization. If a school be properly organized in all its parts the order will generally be good. If the organization be such that all the pupils know exactly what they have to do at a given hour, there is little risk of confusion or disorder. Again when the arrangements of the school are such that the child is kept fully occupied when in school, there is less chance of disorder, than when one half are reciting their lessons, and the other half left to follow the bent of their own inclinations. In the latter case how often does the master labour in vain. He is striving to impart both useful and interesting knowledge to his class. He has begun while calmness and quietness reigned around. The children not actually engaged, at first feel themselves under their master's eye, and maintain their quietness for a time. But he becomes deeply interested in the subject he is teaching, his mind is so occupied with it that he forgets all but his class before him. Now is the time for some of those unemployed to begin their tricks and pranks. The noise continues, at last it attains a pitch that is unendurable. The master stops; there is a dead silence; but one unlucky urchin, too busy to notice the tasmatic sign of his neighbour, is caught in the act of pulling another boy's ear—or something of the kind—and immediately that child is doomed to punishment. Were the scholars to blame in such a case as I have supposed? Truly, they were not. They could not be idle, it would be unnatural if they were; and if the master does not find employment for them, they will find it themselves. The evil in such a case does not only interrupt the school work but engenders habits, both to master and pupil most disastrous to discipline. The master becomes fretted and impatient, the pupil

idle and trifling, and not only so, but they believe that, however much they may like to be left idle, it is the master's duty to provide them with work and come to consider punishment inflicted in this case as an injustice, and to regard the master as a tyrant.

The teacher's character also effects discipline. Example is in all cases more powerful than precepts. What the master desires his pupil to be, he ought himself to be. It seems to be a law of nature that we are more influenced by what we see others do, than by what we hear them say. This is particularly the case of childhood. Hence the teacher who wishes to impress on the mind of his pupil the necessity of order, attention and application, will require to see that he has himself acquired those important habits. Discipline may be promoted by a well framed system of school regulation. The teacher should consider his school as a little kingdom, which has laws for its subjects, and penalties for transgressors. If children are to be governed by certain laws or rules, it is important that they should be familiar with those rules. For this purpose every school should have a few plain and simple regulations, regarding order, punctuality, obedience and application, where they can be seen and understood by the scholars. These regulations should be few in number and printed in expression. While the few means which I have described will perhaps tend to promote discipline, they will not in all cases prevent the occurrence of faults of so great and serious a nature as to require the affliction of punishment: There is no part of the teacher's duty which requires more discretion and judgment than that of which I am now speaking. On the one hand undue softness and leniency will produce disorder, on the other harshness and severity will produce the same effect. It is impossible for me to lay down any definite rules applicable to all cases and in all circumstances. In administering punishment, the disposition of the offender must be taken into account as well as the magnitude of the offence. Two boys may have committed at the same time the same fault, the one may be gentle and by nature unwilling to offend; the other may be rude and fond of giving annoyance. In the case of the former a less severe punishment will serve the ends of discipline than in the case of the latter.

Much has been written on the subject of corporal punishment, and many arguments have been urged against the use of the rod, as a means of discipline in Education. In days gone by, the rod was used with no sparing hand, for this reason it is not to be wondered that many eminent educationists are of the opinion that the teacher should be deprived of the power of inflicting corporal punishment. But the abuse of a thing is no argument against its use. Because the teacher had inflicted corporal punishment in many instances where it did positive mischief, that is no reason why the rod should be wrested entirely from his hands. Necessary chastisement is not opposed to love. The teacher may have the deepest sympathy with the boy while he is compelled to punish him for his misdeeds. Where corporal punishment is thus inflicted, I believe, that all experience goes to prove that its action is beneficial, and I am of the opinion that the time has not yet come when the rod should be banished from

our schools, and consigned to our museums as a relic of a barbarous age. But while such is my opinion, I also hold that the less frequently it is had recourse to the better.

(a continuer)

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Also, all that other piece of land on said lot, bounded on the North by the Main Port Hill Road, West by land of Bernard D. Brown, and South and Easterly by Tyne Valley River.

Also all that other piece of land on Lot Sixteen, in said County:—Commencing at a point on the shore of Grand or Ellis River, in the North-west corner of land in possession of John Forbes, Jr., thence South along the western boundary thereof to the division line between Lots Sixteen and seventeen, thence West along the same to the eastern boundary of land in possession of George Compton, thence North along the same and the eastern boundary line of land in possession of Neil McLean, Alexander McLean and Alexander McCormack to the shore aforesaid, thence East following the various courses thereof to the place of commencement, containing two hundred acres of land, more or less, being the land owned by the late John Forbes in his lifetime. And I do hereby give public notice that I will on Monday, the 20th day of February next, A. D. 1899, at Twelve o'clock noon, at the Court House in Summerside, in the said County, set up and sell at Public Auction the said property, or so much thereof as will satisfy the levy marked on the said Writ, being One Hundred and Forty six Dollars and Forty-nine cents (\$146.49) with interest on One Hundred and Three Dollars and Twenty cents (\$103.20) from the 20th day of March A. D. 1899, at the rate of six per cent per annum, besides Sheriff's fee and all other legal incidental expenses.

JOHN GAFFNEY, Sheriff.

Sheriff's Office, Prince County, August 1st, 1899. 3-ins

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