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Moral Culture in Schools.

We give below the substance of an excellent paper given bv Miss Baines at the recent meeting of S. Grey Teachers. It is a topic which cannot be overdone for the thing itself is in great need of bolstering in many schools.

It to be regretted that many teachers regard moral training as a thing separate and by itself. Too often it is dependent upon the opening exercises or is made the subject of fixed lessons given at stated times in which case it has no connection with real life and is of little value. In other cases amid the numerous subjects to be taught on the curriculum and the eagerness of teachers to have pupils excel in mental work, the moral side of the child's nature is almost entirely neglected and public school education instead of having three aims in view sometimes turns out a product, weak. morally and physically and comparatively over-developed mentally. Francis Parker says the end and aim of education is the development of character.

The moral culture of the rising generation cannot receive too much attention as the future destiny of our country depends on the children of to-day. We should also remember that into our care have come those little ones seeking the way home, and that if only the mental side of the child is developed and the moral allowed to run waste we can expect a person skilful in perpetrating all kinds of evil and evading punishment It were better for a person to go down life's decline an ignorant clod than a moral coward or physical wreck.

Moral culture in schools is training the pupils to distinguish between right and wrong and by different means broadening their views and elevating their nature that right and duty will prevail. If the ethical side of a child's nature is properly cultivated the grown up person of average mental capacity will have little difficulty in determining his duty to his Creator, fellow-creatures and himself and will always value a clear conscience and the right to entertain a thorough self-respect more than any worldly gain to be obtained by a lowering of his principles or actual wrong-doing. The child should learn to know and understand itself before its school life is over. We should be as careful in teaching the pupils self-knowledge, self-reverence and self-control as in teaching them the alphabet. It is the practical person not the dreamer who does the greater part of the world's work. The persons who know their own power mental, moral and physical and also the limitations of their power will not attempt what is clearly unattainable to them and will thus be saved disappointment and perhaps ruin and instead they may be doing something of which they are capable and will thus benefit the world. We should be ready to accept existing conditions with equanimity to submit cheerfully to hardship and hindrances rising above all by patience, steadfastness and determination, always with a noble and great end in view not small, selfish aims. The great nature has the ability to rise above trivial pain, pleasure or praise.

Our personality has more or less influence over everyone with whom we come in contact. The first and greatest necessity and the one which permeates all others is the need of filling the teaching profession as much as possible with meu and women of high ideals and noble character. Every art is more easily taught by example than by precept.

With increased salaries and a much greater security of position the day is surely nearly past when the teacher considers it necessary to lower him or herself to distribute favors among the children of those, such as the trustees, who have the most influence in the community, and it ought to be considered criminal to award prizes and promotions to pupils who are undeserving. It must surely take some time to erase from the child's mind the immoral impression left on it by receiving that which should have been obtained by some one else at the hands of one whom they should be able to respect and copy.

Good discipline is one of the first requisites of a good school. That school in which you find all of the pupils in tumult and disorder on the removal of the disciplinarian or almost every pupil on the alert to take advantage of the new teacher, is receiving a training which isn't doing much towards character building. What to do with the thoroughly bad boy is a question difficult to answer. It seems impossible to conceive of any child being so bad that it cannot be reached in some way. In many cases the seemingly bad child is not understood by either parents or teacher and incorrect methods of treating them is resorted to. The teacher to be a good disciplinarian must study and understand his pupils.

Human Nature is like a match, no virtue comes from it until it has been rubbed against some hard place in life. To protect children from all temptation and rough places will not promote a high moral character. It would be equally unwise to place the child in the way of great temptation at first. Some small hardship and temptation, small enough to be overcome by the childish nature, then a little greater and still greater with sufficient encouragement to ensure against failure and at last the child will develop pluck and confidence and become a rational self-governing girl or boy.

It is scarcely reasonable to teach the child that if it always does what is right it will be sure to have a pleasant time and obtain all the benefits to be had. They should see and expect that vicarious suffering is the lot of all and that the immediate pain caused by wrong-doing often falls most heavily on the innocent.

We should endeavor to have more worthy school incentives than prizes, rewards, etc., as these appeal to the lowest motives and are not conducive to self-government or character building.

All the pupils' games and amusements should come under the notice of the teacher but by no means in the light of an eavesdropper. The teacher should enter into their sports and in so doing ameliorate all deteriorating language and conduct. Rough boisterous or mean conduct can have no elevating influence. All games which excite rude hardening feelings or lessen the pupils reverence for what is sacred should be strictly excluded. They should be taught to do naturally the little courtesies expected as a matter of course from any ordinary lady or gentleman. Never let a pupil see you consider it hopeless and expect nothing better from it. Always make them feel you expect their conduct to be high and noble. In many cases it would be a great help to silently make a note of all rude behavior and improper language and some time during the week without mentioning names, speak of each offence and ask the pupils opinions of the same.

We should teach the value of truthfulness. Let the chiid see that in every life there comes a time in which it would help them and they would give a great deal to be believed and considered trustworthy. The teacher can drive pupils toward deception and untruth by lack of sympathy and undue severity. A fault acknowledged with proper regret should require little or no punishment unless it is of such a character as will lower the moral tone of the whole school unless publicly chastised.

No school is a good school which educates the children away from work. Work is the very condition of the enjoyment of life but ease and honor are seldom companions. If the child can do some work well it will go a long way toward giving it self-confidence and all the other virtues and it will rarely barter or trade self respect for ease or some other such unworthy and lowering element in life, nor is it so apt to degenerate to the swindler or thief. Show the children that a rough diamond is more valuable than a smooth shining imitation; make a distinction between polish and refinement. Make them understand that poor manners and good principles are better than good manners and poor principles. Do not teach that it is better or more respectable to be a lawyer than a farmer or that a banker is better than a mechanic. It is the manner of working not the occupation which ought to reflect honor. All labor is honorable if well done.

To surround the pupils with the beautiful has a refining ennobling influence, and one of the best ways to bring the pupils to a love of the beautiful is to allow them to care for and be responsible for the preservation of something beautiful. The Japanese are among the greatest lovers of beauty and in parts of that country beautiful costly ornaments may remain on the gate from year to year without being destroyed while in our Canada no property either public or private is entirely safe from the destructive hands or knife of some school boy.

Music helps to inculcate a love for the beautiful and refined. It helps to bring the pupils out of themselves and softens and uplifts them. Our patriotic songs inspire pupils with a greater love for their country; so also do stirring tales of bravery and the sacrifice of great men and women to further the common good.

The greater part of moral culture to be real value must be incidental. Every lesson in mathematics, grammar, science etc., may be made lessons in correct reasoning. In almost every lesson in literature and history ennobling truths may be casually impressed on the child's mind. The Village Blasksmith may be made a lesson on the dignity of labor.

The duty of the strong to protect the weak or aged may be learned from such lessons as The Loss of the Birkenhead or Somebody's Mother. Pity for the oppression of the poor may be learned from Hood's Song of the Shirt and love of the simple life from Goldsmiths Deserted Village. Punishment for crime is taught in the Inchcape Rock. The Merchant of Venice, etc. Patriotism in such lessons as Rule Brittania. Courage and unselfishness in Golden Deeds. Submission in Longfellow's Resignation and Charity in the Bridge of Sighs.

We should remember every good impluse given is an evil one checked. Our permanent and ever increasing influence whether for good or evil should be well impressed. Some act performed which will probably only influence a few now, may in the years to come be influenciug thousands.

For ages would its light
Still travelling downward from the sky
Shine on our mortal night.
So when a great man dies
For years beyond our ken
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men.

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