

DISCIPLINE AS A SCHOOL PROBLEM

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

So long as boys are boys and girls are girls and teachers not perfect in training and insight teach, the problem of discipline will continually recur in the administration of our schools. In the whole field of school and classroom management probably no other school problem causes teachers and principals so much perplexity, and all kinds of devices have been proposed and tried with a view to minimizing the amount of trouble from this source.

The author of this volume has attempted to outline a treatment of the problem from a new angle. Instead of outlining a series of devices, or laying down a number of rules to guide teachers under different conditions, he has attempted to analyze the problem by going to the root of the matter. As a physician would study a case coming under his observation, and diagnose the case in the light of certain well-established laws, so the author has analyzed the problem of discipline by going back to the real causes of misbehavior. This he has done in the light of our knowledge of the evolution of humankind, and from the standpoint of certain well-established psychological principles.

The distinct contribution of this volume lies in this method of analysis of the problem, and the diagnosis

made is made in the light of how best to deal with racial instincts and tendencies. The book is an attempt, and a very successful attempt at that, to offer to teachers and principals a method for the diagnosis and treatment of school disciplinary problems, similar to that used by a physician in outlining a plan of treatment for a patient he is called in to see. The individual rather than the mass, though often under mass conditions; "the case," rather than the general disease of which the case is an example; individual analysis and treatment, rather than the application of general school-made rules; and a line of treatment paralleling the direction of racial evolution, and the swerve of the race toward civilization and away from brute force and law; — these are fundamentals in the analysis of the problem which the author has here outlined. The threefold division, dealing with the problem first from the standpoint of the child as an individual, then as a member of a school class, and finally as a part of an organized social institution, the school, adds materially to the value of the treatment.

The volume here presented should prove of much service in normal schools and teachers' training classes, in starting the thinking of new teachers on the problem in the right direction; but it should be particularly illuminating to teachers and principals in service, as they are in position to appreciate better the value of the fundamental treatment here laid down.

ELLWOOD P. CUBBERLEY.