

**A CRITICAL STUDY OF DISCIPLINE  
IN  
PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS  
OF  
SYRIA**

**By**

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## PREFACE

To the writer's best knowledge, the present work is the first attempt at the study of discipline in the Syrian schools, especially in Damascus and Latakia.

The problem of school discipline in Syria is a many-sided problem that needs reconsideration and solution. It is significant in Syria which has been recently emancipated from foreign domination, and needs to rebuild its life, society and institutions on a sound basis. The new Syrian nationalistic trend makes it of the utmost importance that the country gears its efforts to the improvement of education and the building up of a strong character in the rising generations. A young country like Syria needs freedom-loving patriots and socially minded citizens who are able to raise their country to the level of great nations. This remote objective implies that character education and discipline are of major concern.

The scope of the present study is limited to the primary schools; because, first it would have been a big undertaking if it had been extended to include other institutions in the educational ladder; second and more important, because primary graders are in the tender ages of development where the process of socialization is mostly achieved.

The scope of the study is further narrowed to include only the public primary schools, their pupils representing the greater majority of the primary school population.

The general outline of this work is as follows:

The first chapter presents the philosophy of discipline and theories of punishment, which provide the basis for the evaluation of disciplinary measures in Syrian schools.

The second chapter presents a general survey of the actual situation of school discipline. Here factual materials are presented with their interpretations.

The third chapter presents an evaluation of the remedial phase of discipline, or the critical study of methods of correction and rewards used in primary schools, followed by proposed recommendations.

In the fourth chapter, an attempt toward positive, preventive discipline is made. It suggests a constructive treatment of the problem of discipline.

This study is merely a preliminary one which should be complemented by others. It is hoped that students of education and Syrian Educationists will make in the near future better planned and more comprehensive studies of the subject.

Finally, I wish to express my acknowledgment to the Syrian Ministry of Education and to the primary teachers who helped me in collecting data for the study, and my deep indebtedness to Dr. H. Kurani, Professor G. Shahla, Mrs. E. Kerr, and Mr. L. Melikian of the American University of Beirut, and to all those who helped me in rendering this work possible.

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## CHAPTER I

### PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE AND THEORIES OF PUNISHMENT

Before presenting a critical analysis of disciplinary measures in Syrian public primary and elementary schools, a consideration of philosophy of discipline, its types and measures is necessary to which the present chapter is devoted.

#### A. PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE

##### 1. What is Discipline?

School discipline, being a phase of education, is as the latter an evolutionary concept. In theory as well as in practice, it underwent throughout the history of education, drastic changes which paralleled the evolution of philosophies of life and education. Therefore, no one single definition or meaning of the term is obtained in textbooks on education or dictionaries. Discipline as meaning control gained by enforcing obedience or order <sup>(1)</sup> is no longer acceptable, nor as direct authoritative control of pupil's behavior through punishments and rewards <sup>(2)</sup> or as meaning punishment <sup>(3)</sup>. Fortunately these are not the only meanings given in dictionaries.

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(1) Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition, Unabridged, G. & C. Merriam Co., 1949.

(2) Dictionary of Education - Good., Carter V., First Edition. Second Impression, New York, 1945, p. 134.

(3) Webster's New International Dictionary, op. cit.

According to the writer, the best dictionary definition states discipline as a persistent, active, self-directed pursuit of some selected course of action, even in the face of obstacles and distractions. This definition is in harmony with the following concept by Dewey:

"A person who is trained to consider his actions, to undertake them deliberately, is in so far forth disciplined. Add to this ability a power to endure in an intelligently chosen course in face of distraction, confusion and difficulty and you have the essence of discipline. Discipline means power at command, mastery of the resources available for carrying through the action undertaken. To know what one is about and to move to do it promptly and by the use of the requisite means is to be disciplined."<sup>(1)</sup>

Dewey's definition implies that discipline involves a goal, a course of action toward the realization of this goal; which demands an intellectual power and discernment to recognize the goal and the ways leading to it. It stresses the rational element in discipline as well as the strength or persistence in carrying the action out. Implicit is the importance of the individual, his freedom of choice as well as his personal responsibility.

Home and school education should strive to produce this kind of disciplined, self-directed and self-determined person. It

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(1) Dewey, John, "Democracy and Education", The Macmillan Company, New York, 1916, pp. 151-152.



is a long and might be a life long process that requires the provision of conditions conducive to the individual's growth toward this end.

From Dewey's definition we draw three conclusions:

- 1) The end of discipline is self-discipline, or the ability of the individual to guide himself and act thoughtfully and rightly.
- 2) This type of discipline is democratic, based on the freedom of the individual coupled with his responsibility.
- 3) When carried to the realm of education, it means the training and intellectual development of the child in order to be able to make choices, and the development of his will, or persistence which is an important part of character and personality.

This concept of discipline becomes synonymous with character education, or the building up of worthy standards of behavior and habits of conduct.

It is not an abstract term or something added to the work of the school, but the most important characteristic of the school's whole program and permeates every phase of learning, teaching and even administration and supervision. All conditions within the school and outside should lead the child to grow in character, with freedom and responsibility and consideration of consequences of his decisions.

Discipline cannot be separated from teaching and it might be rightly said that "it is teaching of the finest type", <sup>(1)</sup> to quote Hockett and Jacobsen, and it is "an incident, a phase of the total school procedure." <sup>(2)</sup>

## 2. Discipline and Order

Order is the smooth running of the school activities, or the state in which rules are obeyed and everything goes smoothly without trouble or confusion. It is a means to a farther end which is discipline and a necessary part of it. School control, being wider than school order, guides the pupils, organizes their lives and helps them in the acquisition of desirable character traits unattainable without school order. Thus school order and discipline supplement each other, and as there is no discipline without order there is no order without discipline.

## 3. Aims of School Control

Conceived as character education and a phase of education as a whole, discipline is not an end in itself, but a means toward a remote end which is the welfare of the individual and society. We can quote Mueller, "The purpose of discipline is to help the individual acquire knowledge, powers, habits, interests and ideals which are designed for the well-being of himself, his fellows and society as a whole." <sup>(3)</sup>

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(1) Hockett & Jacobsen, "Modern Practices in Elementary School", Ginn & Company, Boston, 1943, pp. 204-205.

(2) Sears, Jesse. B., "Classroom Organization & Control", Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, 1928, pp. 66-67.

(3) Mueller, A.D., "Teaching in Secondary Schools", The Century Company, New York, 1928, p. 48.

In other words, discipline aims at preparing the individual to participate effectively in and to be a useful member of society. A well educated person, well developed intellectually, emotionally, morally and socially and able to live happily with others as well as for others. It is clear that discipline as conceived by Mueller is as broad as education. In fact, he conceives of it as the whole education when he gives it the following definition: "In its modern and inclusive sense, discipline means preparing boys and girls for life in a democratic society", <sup>(1)</sup> that amounts to saying school control is synonymous with democratic education. This definition in its deepest meaning is not in disagreement with that of Dewey which stresses making decisions about actions and freedom in acting, both of which are so needed in democratic life.

In line with the purpose of school control given by Mueller, two kinds of specific aims of discipline may be distinguished: a) Negative aims, and b) Positive aims.

a) Negative Aims

They consist in preventing the development of wrong habits of conduct and negative character traits detrimental to both the individual and society. The students should not acquire wrong standards of behavior that interfere with the general progress of the school or with the happiness of the social group whether in the school, home or community, such as stealing, lying, hurting

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(1) Ibid., p. 48.

others, disrespect for others, laziness, noisiness, dirtiness, etc.. The teacher must be alert whenever such conduct appears and should always break down wrong standards and reform the wrongdoers.

b) Positive Aims

As stated earlier, it is necessary for the individual and society that negative character traits and antisocial behavior be absent. But the welfare of both depends on more positive conduct. Social progress and security and human happiness need not only the absence of negative destructive behavior, but, also constructive attitudes. Therefore, it is of the utmost necessity that, in child education, negative aims of discipline be a small part and that training of children in positive character traits be of major importance. These future citizens should acquire initiative, self-control, helpfulness, reliability, responsibility and cooperation with others, or those traits upon which healthy society is built and which render man an active useful member of society, contributing positively and constructively to its welfare.

4. Types of School Control

Having accepted the concept of discipline as character education, it is pertinent to ask; how can the school make the students keep order, perform their duties, obey school regulations, profit from the school facilities, display good conduct and build desirable habits and moral ideals. Is there one single type of school control advocated by educators and maintained in schools? Educators are not agreed as to the type of control. Different

philosophies of education have their application in different ways of control among which are the following:

- a) Absolute control.
- b) Personal influence or magnetism.
- c) Democratic discipline or control through reason and responsibility.
- d) Preventive discipline.

The aim of the following remarks is to give a brief discussion of each of these four types of control.

a) Absolute control

If ever you had the chance to visit a class in some traditional school, under an old-fashioned teacher, you would probably see the principles of absolute control in practice.

Under this old type of control, students are required to maintain a rigid sitting position, to stand still like soldiers at attention when the teacher stands or calls them, or march in straight lines to and from the classroom, or bend their heads when addressing the teacher. They are not allowed to speak even in a low voice, without permission, or to move in their seats. The well-behaved class is the silent-passive class. A pin-drop-quiet room where students are suppressed, passive and where the teacher is the active authoritarian commander, the center of gravity.

Blind conformity and submission to school regulations and orders is required and obtained through force, fear of punishments and desire for reward... Not character, but a consideration of

consequences makes the good child. Rules are imposed on the pupils who should conform no matter what the results on their personality or mental health might be.

This old philosophy was based upon the doctrine of the evil nature of the child. Fortunately, this view toward child nature is giving way to a more humane and scientific attitude.

The concept of discipline as submission to absolute control has no place in modern schools, and the theory is no longer acceptable in such schools.

- 1) It has the element of fear at its basis. It relies on fear for instilling desirable character traits and correcting wrong conduct. The value of fear is questionable in modern character education, as it will be shown later in dealing with theories of punishment.
- 2) The traditional concept of discipline represses the interests and enthusiasms of the children. It is injurious to their personalities. Whether in determining the general atmosphere of the school, methods of dealing with children, methods of teaching and school organization, traditional methods of control are repressive and unconstructive. Punishments occupy an important place in absolute control, harsh humiliating such as corporal punishment, and are administered without regard to their effect on the inner life of the child.

3) The effect of absolute control and military discipline is momentary. When force and suppression are absent, chaos, disorder and confusion take place, because of the absence of a willing sincere attitude toward good conduct in the pupils.

4) Moreover, absolute control may give birth to revolt and resentment and thus increase misbehavior.

Examples of political history show that where absolute suppressive rules, <sup>prevailed</sup> /revolutions took place and upheavals gave the people their freedom.

Experimental studies confirm our view that force and rule from above produce aggressiveness. In a study made by Lippit <sup>(1)</sup> on the effect of democratic and autocratic atmospheres upon behavior, it was found how the form of social organization influences individual behavior and social relationships. Two groups of ten and eleven year old boys were observed under conditions of authoritative and democratic direction. In the democratic group, students were given a voice in the selection and planning of their activities and the adult tried to treat them in a man-to-man fashion. In the autocratic group, the adult director made all decisions, gave very specific instructions and proceeded from one phase of the work to the next without informing them of the plan as a whole. Lippit's study shows that autocratic control developed greater hostility and

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(1) Lippit, R., "An Experimental Study of the Effect of Democratic & Authoritarian Group Atmospheres", University of Iowa Studies in Child Welfare, 1940, XVI, No. 5.

aggressiveness among members and fostered personal dislikes, submissiveness and resentment toward the leader and prompted solitary rather than social activity and cooperation. The democratic atmosphere was much more conducive to cooperative activity, objectivity and impersonal reactions, more constructive effort and a feeling of group membership.

Finally, absolute control and suppression are against the principles of democracy. If freedom and democracy are our aims, we should depart from autocratic control, and train youngsters in the art of freedom. If we teach them blind obedience and complete submission, we miss our objectives. Pupils who have been marionettes in the hands of their masters cannot be leaders and live in a democracy.

b) Control through personal influence of the teacher or personal magnetism.

This type of control substitutes teacher's influence and magnetism for fear. Here the strong personality of the teacher and his direct influence on his students make him the ideal person in their eyes, the hero to be worshiped, and the model to be followed. Admiring and loving him, they enthusiastically try to imitate him in every aspect from bodily gesture, to manner of speech and character.

One can remember some teacher who influenced one's life and character, whose ideal one still pursues.

Control through personal magnetism of the teacher may be



of great value, but it is not the highest type of control. It is true that the teacher should exemplify the moral standards and ideals he teaches; but personal magnetism limits the child's freedom and sometimes weakens him and makes him dependent on the teacher. Students should not be slaves and mere imitators of their teachers; they must realize that even their teacher's influence should be subjected to critical thought.

Moreover, modern education refuses regimentation of children or even molding them according to their teacher's model, but instead, it respects their individualities and personal characteristics.

c) Democratic control or control through reason, responsibility and cooperation.

Progressive education controls through responsibility coupled with reason and freedom. Students acquire positive right standards of conduct, by participating in school activities, by practicing these traits such as cooperation, helpfulness and reliability, by learning independence of thought, making decisions and taking responsibilities.

They learn intelligent obedience to school regulations and authority. They obey school rules because either they had shared in their making or understood their necessity, importance and usefulness to their welfare and that of the group. They behave well, do not disturb others or interfere with their work, because they realize the implications of their behavior to others' welfare.

They know that their freedom which should be wisely used, ends where the freedom of others begins.

Good conduct is displayed not because of fear of punishment but because of social benefit and approval.

Democratic control substitutes self-control to external control by substituting obedience to folkways and the group to obedience to personal external authority. When the child has learned and reached self-discipline which is the end of democratic control, when he departs from submission to external control, he has grown in freedom or he is free. This growth in freedom consists in acting with better insight and more social disposition, in knowing and accepting the consequences of one's decisions. (1)

In this type of control, the principles of democracy are satisfied, mainly the respect of the student as a human being and of his dignity. The pupils' interests, enthusiasms and personalities are respected. Their active participation in school life not their passiveness is emphasized, under the leadership and guidance of teachers. It is the highest type of school control the outcome of which are men and women deserving to live, free from oppression and suppression, responsible, reliable, cooperative and efficient members of society.

d) Preventive, prophylaxis discipline.

It was stated earlier that discipline is synonymous

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(1) Hockett, John A., & Jacobsen, E.W., op. cit., pp. 207-208.

with character education, positive, democratic and that it is no more considered as punishment.

In fact, punishment in modern education occupies but a smaller part of discipline and aims at the pupil's reform. Later, we will examine theories of punishment, but it is necessary here to add some characteristics of modern discipline.

School discipline nowadays is preventive in nature, on the dictum that "an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure". It puts the emphasis upon the environment, training and the institutional facilities as an important factor in right positive conduct. Educational and sociological leaders realize that desirable behavior is the outcome of good situations at school and at home, and that misconduct and unsocial attitudes are the results of this environment as well. When conditions are satisfying, misbehavior rarely occurs. Thus meticulous care should be taken to secure right conditions in the school management, interpersonal relations within it, physical conditions of school and classrooms, teaching procedures, curriculum, activities, requirements and favorable home conditions. Under good conditions, the students will be disciplined, industrious, eager to study and perform their duties, maintain wholesome attitudes, develop positive conduct patterns.

According to this view, ideal home and school situations would never necessitate the recourse to punishing an overt act because antisocial behavior would not occur.

Of course, an ideal situation seldom exists and misbehavior will always occur. In this case, discipline consists in attacking the causes of maladjustment which gave birth to misconduct, by improving school and environment in order to remedy wrong behavior. Modern educators recognize that unsocial behavior is the result or the symptom of maladjustment. Reforming misbehavior necessitates doing away with unfavorable conditions which lead to it and punishing is a small part of the process.

Constructive discipline looks to the welfare of the individual and his mental health. Therefore, it does not only concern itself with the child's overt acts and their remedy in a manner harmless to his mental health, but it is interested as well in all types of behavior, especially, in withdrawing tendencies, those that pass sometimes unnoticed because not hurting others. The progressive teacher will pay attention to the chronic daydreamer, the unsocial, the passive and withdrawing child, whose withdrawal is but an escape mechanism and a symptom of inner conflicts or difficulties that should be removed to make the child happy. The educator must be alert to these types of evasion doing more harm to the child's personality than aggressive overt behavior.

From the above discussion, we can conclude that discipline has two fundamental aspects:

- 1) The constructive, preventive aspect or indirect means of control which represent the provision of good school and home situations in which difficulties of behavior

are not likely to arise; or even when school situations are not ideal, what preventive measures can be taken by the teacher to diminish the number of undesirable responses by the students.

- 2) The remedial aspect, or direct means of control which consists of what the teacher can do when undesirable behavior occurs, that is disciplinary measures and their administration.

## B. THEORIES OF PUNISHMENT

Punishment, as a part of school control, underwent as the latter a drastic evolution in theory and practice in the history of social life and school education. Flogging, harsh castigation characterized the Roman school. Medieval methods of correction were suppressive and continued so till modern times. A maxim that prevailed in the middle of the eighteenth century was "A boy has a back, when you hit it he understands"<sup>(1)</sup>. Whipping posts were sometimes set up in the schoolroom. School masters used to have bundles of switches near at hand. Fortunately, humiliation, scolding, publicizing are giving way to measures more considerate of the child's personality and mental health.

The evolution of theories and practices of punishment paralleled closely changing theological and ethical dogmas, because the school and social life had long been under the influence of

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(1) Cubberley, Ellwood P., "The History of Education", Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, 1920, p. 455.

religion and its institutions in Eastern and Western countries. Modern social, psychological and educational theories had their influence in altering this.

The following are some of the well-known theories of punishment:

1. Retributive Theory.
2. Deterrent Theory.
3. Theory of Natural Punishment.
4. Remedial Theory.

#### 1. Retributive Theory

Retribution or repayment was taught by religious dogmas, retributive in ethical concept, from Hammurabi to Mosaic Codes, even Islam. Every act should be either rewarded or punished. Every wrong action should be penalized. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth", and "He will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third or fourth generations", are typical maxims of a theology of retribution cast into a social mold. In fact, these religions influenced theories of punishment in society and schools even among western countries.

According to the theory, every wrong action on the part of students should be punished, without exception. This theory is no longer accepted as a principle of discipline in modern education and should not be followed by any teacher. Of course, retribution, as a natural consequence of error, is not refused and cannot be eliminated altogether, but when punishment is intended and inflicted

from above, it is refused. Retribution involves the danger of neglecting the motive to the action and the individual pupil. The punisher has in sight the wrong doing itself not the motive to it. He is likely to neglect causes and be satisfied with punishing. When motive is ignored, the penalty becomes unjust, because first, sometimes the culprit cannot be held responsible for his guilt caused by factors beyond his control, second, his guilt may be unintended or a result of ignorance and forgetfulness.

Moreover, there is a danger that the wrong doing becomes the center of attention and interest when punishment is made to fit the guilt as in retribution. Although punishment should not be dissociated from the guilt, yet, it must not fit the guilt. Instead, it must fit the individual who needs our attention for reform and remedy.

## 2. Deterrent Theory

Related to the retributive theory, but a step beyond it and more recent in the evolution of educational thought, the deterrent theory has taken on social significance. Retribution, individual in concept, has lesser social values, and contains the element of vindictiveness.

Deterrent theory tells that punishments must look to one of two results: (1) the prevention of the individual from a repetition of the social offense through fear of the pain and the consequent penalties inflicted, or (2) and more important, the example it brings to members of society to remind them of the dire consequences

(1)  
of such misbehavior.

In the schools, the theory resulted in the "dunce cap", in making a pupil stand in a corner before the pupils and other forms of punishment inflicted publicly. The psychological effects of humiliation and shame concomittant to publicizing were thought to have the effect preventing both the pupil punished and the other students from either repeating or committing such misbehavior.

In reality, these punishments are not truly educative, and deterrentism is not acceptable. The following are the most important reasons:

- 1) Experiments made by Thorndike and other psychologists yield conflicting conclusions on the effect of punishment on learning.

Some studies indicate that punishment may not deter from the wrong action, especially when severe. It does not lessen the punished behavior, but only make the individual more miserable, frightened or ashamed, morseful and unhappy. (2) Thorndike's findings show that

it is the consistency of punishment not its severity that educates. In fact, severe punishment loses its potency and influence. The excessive fear and shame aroused dull the person's sensitiveness to the penalty. (3)

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(1) Bossing, Nelson, L., "Progressive Methods of Teaching in Secondary Schools", Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, p. 142.

(2) Thorndike, Edward L., "The Psychology of Wants, Interests and Attitudes", D. Appleton Century Company Inc., New York, 1935, p. 150.

(3) Ibid, p. 150.



2) Usually, punishment deters from the wrong action, according to the law of effect. But when it does, it fails to indicate the right action. In other words, it indicates to the individual what not to do, not what to do and how to do it.

On the other hand, when the individual is deterred from a specific bad action by a painful penalty which usually does not remove causes of misbehavior, his impulses may be directed to other harmful directions. A person can weaken or nullify the force of painful punishment by choosing as the social group whose opinions he will value one that is to any degree liberal, unorthodox, eccentric, low or vicious.<sup>(1)</sup>

3) Punishment may deter through fear, but it fails to consider the remote end which is the deep effect on the person. It does not reach the deepest attitudes of children and make them willing to improve their conduct. At the same time it is harmful to their personality development and mental health.

4) Deterrentism minimizes the needs of the individual and makes the needs of the group paramount. When a teacher punishes a student to set an example for others, he is likely to exaggerate the penalty and make it out of proportion to the misdeed, in order to make more effect

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(1) Ibid., p. 150.

on the group. This means that the punisher admits the subordination of the individual to the group because the effects of pain upon his personality development are disregarded. But when we go deeply into the matter, we realize that publicly inflicted punishment is detrimental to both the person punished and the group. It terrifies the sensitive timid pupils, produce excitement, fear, pity, anger and resentment in all. The many are made to suffer with the one.

- 5) Punishment of this type has the element of fear as the chief control of behavior. Fear is a negative incentive to action. The writer thinks that education should not be based on fear or frightening, even though fear cannot be entirely eliminated from physical and social environment. Students should be motivated by every means to gain positive habits of conduct and develop desirable emotional and social attitudes, not because of fear, but for their import and usefulness to themselves and society. The only kind of fear permitted is the fear of social disapproval which itself should be moderate so as not to lead to blind conformity and social slavery. Respect of the consequences of actions should replace fear of punishment.

### 3. Theory of Natural Punishment

This theory paralleled the naturalistic educational move-

ment of the eighteenth century and is the moral application of Rousseau's philosophy of negative education. Rousseau's doctrine of moral training by natural consequences, later interpreted by Herbert Spencer, was a revolt against the prevailing harsh disciplinary methods.

Rousseau would allow the child to suffer the natural results of his own acts without the intervention of human beings to protect or punish. According to him, the educator might correct the child so long as he could make it appear to him that punishment came through natural consequences and that human interference had nothing to do with it. If the child overeats let him be sick; if he breaks a window let him sit in the cold. In fact, let him suffer the natural results of the contravention of nature's laws or of his own being.

This method of discipline, as a part of negative education, is based upon the conception of goodness of human nature, which opposed for the first time the prevailing religious teachings and old psychologies considering human nature as essentially bad.

Herbert Spencer builds his whole system of moral training on the principle of punishment through natural consequences. When a child falls, he says, or runs his head against the table, he suffers a pain the remembrance of which tends to make him more careful and by repetition of such experiences, he is disciplined into the proper guidance of his movements.

Spencer gives examples of natural punishments, e.g., if

a child is not ready at an appointed time, the natural result is that of being left behind. If a child by carelessness breaks or loses something not belonging to him, the natural penalty for him would be to replace it; if he lies, he will not be believed.

Spencer denies the effect of what he calls artificial, unnatural punishments inflicted by adults on the child such as scolding and beating. He believes that his theory holds true even in serious cases of misconduct. Theft, for instance, has restitution and the disapproval of others as a natural consequence.

He defends his theory by giving its advantages. According to him, these "unavoidable consequences"<sup>(1)</sup> of the child's deeds are proportionate to the transgression. A slight accident brings a slight pain, a more serious one a severer pain. These natural relations are constant, direct and certain. If a child, he says, runs a pin into his finger, pain follows and if he does it again, he obtains the same result and hence he becomes extremely careful not to transgress.

One can better grasp the theory in the light of Spencer's scientific approach to the philosophy of education. When one knows that he claims in his "Introduction to Ethics" that morals should become rational and secularized,<sup>(2)</sup> one understands him better when he says that natural punishment generates right conception of cause

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(1) Spencer, Herbert, "On Education". Landmarks in the History of Education, F.A. Cavenagh, Cambridge University Press, 1932, p.124.

(2) Monroe, Paul, "A Textbook in the History of Education", the Macmillan Company, New York, 1917, p. 559.

and effect. The child gains through it a knowledge of causation and a feeling of consequences needed in adult life, whereas a child given a factitious penalty does not care for consequences and misses that instruction respecting the essential nature of good and evil conduct. <sup>(1)</sup>

It is true that natural punishment is in general just, but not of "pure justice" <sup>(2)</sup> as Spencer claims. The child will recognize its justice because of the connection in nature and content between the action and its consequence. He is much less likely to think himself wrongly treated than when he suffers an artificial penalty inflicted by adults. A child shunned by his friends for having insulted them, feels the penalty more just than the scolding he received from the teacher for the same action. Therefore the tempers of both the adults and the punished are much less liable to be ruffled under this system of penalties than under ordinary system in which the adult, whether the parent or the teacher, seems to be the cause of punishment. As a result, good relations and friendly atmosphere remain intact between the educators and the child who will not develop resentment toward them, because they have nothing to do with the penalty and are not but spectators. This friendly atmosphere reduces the number of bits of misbehavior and is more influential in their moral education.

Although this theory contains much truth, there are limitations to its applicability for the following reasons:

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(1) Spencer, Herbert, op. cit., p. 132.

(2) Ibid., p. 132.

1) Pain or displeasure, if moderate, are useful as a tool of character training. But nature's punishment is sometimes not proportionate to the action, severe and rude. Serious dangers may result from leaving a child burn his hand, or not preventing him from approaching fire or going downstairs alone. When we allow him to play with a sharp knife, he might cut his hand or unwillingly harm himself or other children. Nature's punishment, then, might cause irreparable injury before the child could be educated. If the child persists in trying to leap out of a fifth story window, the discipline of natural consequences would be absurd.

Moreover, justice, so much stressed in punishment is not the most effective means of character training. Tolerance, affection and forgiveness have sometimes miraculous effects. The child does not only learn by justice in punishment; he learns more from affectionate tolerant attitudes of the adult toward his fault. When we forgive his errors, he learns to be more tolerant toward others.

2) Nature punishment might come late. A man addicted to alcoholism receives his punishment very late, perhaps after long years. The lazy student fails in the final examination and is not promoted, while it would have been better to save him earlier from this end.

3) Nature, sometimes, instead of educating the individual,

leads him to be more prudent and trickful and to take precautions against harm. e.g. If a child falls and his arm is broken, while trying to get on a chair to reach a dish of some forbidden cakes put on a shelf, he does not learn not to violate orders; instead, he will learn to be more careful and invent safer ways. We can quote Monroe: "Such a training would lead to the development of prudence rather than of morality." (1)

- 4) The theory of natural discipline is negative. It does not set up to the child worthy standards to follow, nor guide him or advise or protect him or teach him positive desirable traits.

Nevertheless, we can borrow the essence and spirit of the doctrine in our discipline, by making punishments as few as possible, by making them related in content and nature to the misdeed as well as the child. Innumerable cases of misbehavior in the school yield to this kind of treatment. If a boy throws a ball at a window and breaks it, he should replace it, if he can afford the money and offer apology. When a pupil is rude, the natural penalty is the dislike of his associates until he is willing to be kind to them. When he pours ink on the floor, he should clean it up. Disapproval, isolation or exclusion from the group, restitution,

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(1) Monroe, Paul, op. cit., p. 557.

reparation and apology are penalties of this type.

#### 4. Remedial Theory

The remedial theory does not consider punishment as an end in itself, but as a remedy, a means of restoring the individual pupil to cooperation and harmony with the group. Reform of the offender is one of its ultimate aims. When a teacher, for instance, asks a pupil to change his seat for speaking constantly with his neighbor, the purpose of removal is not revenge on the pupil, nor deterring others even though the others may later be careful not to speak, the purpose is to prevent constant speech which interferes with the profit of both pupils and their classmates from the lesson and to help the removed child to see the consequence of his action and develop habits of attentiveness.

Correction of a recent fault is not the only objective to be sought, but improvement of future behavior, changes in basic attitudes of the student are considered of greater importance. The penalty and its administration should lead the child to will wholeheartedly to reform himself and further good conduct. This end should not be attained by fear, but by creating in him the emotional disposition favorable to improvement and the intelligent understanding of the import of the action to himself and the group, and by making him see the reasonableness and advantages of acceptable behavior.

The remedial theory of punishment is based upon the respect of the child's personality development and mental health. According



to the theory, punishment should not be detrimental to the child's mental health. Therefore, penalties should occupy the smaller part in discipline and be reduced to a minimum. This newer attitude toward punishment has its roots in the interpretation of misbehavior in the light of the psychology of adjustment. New psychology considers misdemeanor either as useful energy directed into the wrong channels or as symptoms of maladjustment of the pupil whether at home or school. In modern remedial discipline great effort is directed toward the removal of causes of maladjustments and the intelligent redirection of the pupil's energy into the right channels.

Finally, the remedial theory based upon the principles of mental hygiene, goes hand in hand with the new prophylaxis, preventive theory of discipline, and both represent the newest trends in character education.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ACTUAL SITUATION OF DISCIPLINE IN SYRIAN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

#### A. MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY

Materials for the study of methods of discipline sanctioned and practiced in Syrian public elementary and primary schools have been gathered from three sources. First, by two experiments, one conducted in Latakia and the other in Damascus; second, official regulations of the Syrian Ministry of Education pertaining to discipline; third, observations in schools and classrooms.

The investigation involves the general state of discipline in theory and practice. In other words, it rotates about teachers' conception of school control, actual school discipline, its methods and their application, types of misbehavior, their causes and the teachers' attitudes toward them. The major source of information are the experiments.

#### 1. The First Experiment

##### a) Description

The first experiment given to nearly all public elementary school teachers in Latakia, in January 1951, was intended to discover their general ideas on discipline and methods of correction used or approved by them.

The experiment consists of five parts: (see Appendix)

Part I purports to give a general idea about teachers' conception of school discipline.

Part II is intended to give an idea about teachers' opinions about the usefulness of some forms of punishment.

Part III is planned in order to show teachers' theoretical knowledge about the administration of penalties.

Part IV purports to discover their attitudes toward children's behavior.

Part V is intended to obtain examples of problem behavior with concrete ways of treating them; or to have any additional information or views about discipline. It was considered as a check on the theoretical views of teachers on discipline. But it seems that the experiment was long, therefore almost all the teachers did not answer this last part.

#### b) Administration

The questionnaire was typewritten and distributed to almost all the public elementary and primary school teachers in Latakia. 80 teachers from twelve schools, forty-two men and thirty-eight women teachers contributed to the results. The writer conducted the experiment by making visits to the schools and giving the papers to the teachers at recess time while conversing with them and making clear the objectives of the study. The teachers were asked to be frank in their ratings. Time was unlimited so that they could hand in the answers one or two days after the distribution of the questionnaire. But the writer thinks that very

little time was spent in answering it.

I really appreciate the frankness with which teachers answered the questionnaires, even when they knew that what they considered useful among corrective techniques had been abolished by official regulations. Frankness was ensured, as teachers were told not to sign their names, but simply to give their sex.

## 2. The Second Experiment

The first questionnaire administered in Latakia did not yield reliable information about discipline in schools, because the last part was not answered. Therefore, I could not have an accurate picture of misconduct and concrete treatment of specific cases. I felt the need for specific instances of behavior problems, with detailed treatment, as well as a valid check on teachers' reports about methods of correction. Therefore, I planned to conduct a second experiment in Damascus.

The second experiment consists of two parts:

### Part I

#### a) Description

Part I consists of two questions given to teachers.

Question 1 states:

"Describe as accurately as you can something a pupil in your class did which you thought was wrong and what measures did you take in that case."

This question was similar to part V, experiment I, which

was not answered. The aim was to obtain a knowledge about types of misbehavior and punishments used. The writer requested those who volunteered to answer the question to give some details about the situation in which the wrong act took place, its causes, and other information which might throw light on the interpretation of the act, such as the pupil's age, mental ability, industry, grade and the lesson period during which it happened.

Question 2 is designed to attain two purposes:

- 1) Knowing types of behavior in schools,
- 2) Knowing teachers' attitudes toward them.

The question consists of a list containing twenty types of children's behavior. Teachers were asked to rate the frequency of their occurrence.

#### b) Administration

Experiment II, Part I, was administered in the same way as that conducted in Latakia. Answers were obtained from one hundred teachers, fifty-seven men and forty-three women teachers, in eighteen public elementary schools selected at random in different quarters of the city. To insure sincerity, names of teachers were not to be signed and the answers were to be given in closed envelopes. Time was unlimited.

Part II - Aims at having a check on teachers' opinions and reports on treatment of cases. In other words, it purports to give a view of the subject from the students' angle.

a) Description

Part II is composed of the following question:

"Describe briefly something you did in your last school which you think you should not have done. State what was the reaction of the teacher and what measures did he take against it."

The idea of this form of checking upon teachers' answers was borrowed from Gutts and Moseley <sup>(1)</sup> who wrote on discipline from the mental hygiene point of view, after an investigation of this type a part of which consisted in giving a similar question to about a thousand seventh graders.

b) Administration

The previous question was given by the writer to 116 six graders, thirty-eight girls and seventy-eight boys in two public secondary schools in Damascus. The answers were written on the paper containing the question and distributed to the students in their classes during one school hour. Before beginning they were told that the aim was to gather facts about what we all did when we were young and that they had to be sincere. Two facts insured their sincerity. <sup>First</sup> they were asked not to give their names, and secondly they were not responsible for what they wrote about a past event in their previous schools. The students handed in the papers within the first twenty minutes.

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(1) Gutts Norma E., and Mosely Nicholas, "Practical School Discipline and Mental Hygiene", Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1941, p. 291.

To sum up, the idea behind these experiments is not a statistical evaluation and study of disciplinary devices in Syrian public elementary schools, but to have a general idea about types of misconduct, ways of their treatment and the type of school control, in order to study the philosophy underlying our methods of discipline and to give a critical study of these methods.

## B. TYPES OF SCHOOL CONTROL

What types of control prevail in our schools? To answer the question we should consider two things:

1. Theoretical views of teachers on control.
2. Actual type of control.

### 1. Theoretical Views of Teachers

Teachers' views on discipline were mainly obtained by the first part of Experiment I, conducted in Latakia, which consisted in ranking in order of importance seven unarranged phases and aims of school discipline (See appendix, Part I, Exp. I). The experimenter, in addition to her aiming at a knowledge of their conception of discipline, searched for a comparison between theory and practice and causes of discrepancy between them.

Table I represents the seven items arranged according to the degree of importance in the experimenter's opinion and the results obtained. The first two items represent the constructive, preventive aspects of school control; the third, correction of misbehavior, denotes the remedial aspect; the fourth stands for

the deterrent theory; the fifth for the retributive; the sixth represents a partial by-product of control and denotes military, absolute control. The last item, not to disturb other classes is a by-product of smooth school control and a secondary function of discipline and can be inserted under item 2.

From the results we can draw the following conclusions:

- 1) Only one phase of school control had the majority of teachers, namely, the preventive constructive one. More than half of the teachers conceive that discipline, preventive as it should be, must provide conditions facilitating the development of desirable conduct. Their rating ranged between ranks 1 and 2, with the greater number of teachers in the first rank. This broad conception is in line with modern educational views which consider discipline as permeating school organization, curriculum, methods of teaching, and school atmosphere.

Teachers in Latakia recognize also that misbehavior is caused by unsatisfactory school conditions, buildings, seatings, playgrounds, etc... although they are inclined to disregard the part they play in misconduct. They complain about certain school conditions that interfere with the moral education of the students, and urge the educational authorities to remedy these deficiencies. For instance, a principal complained to the writer

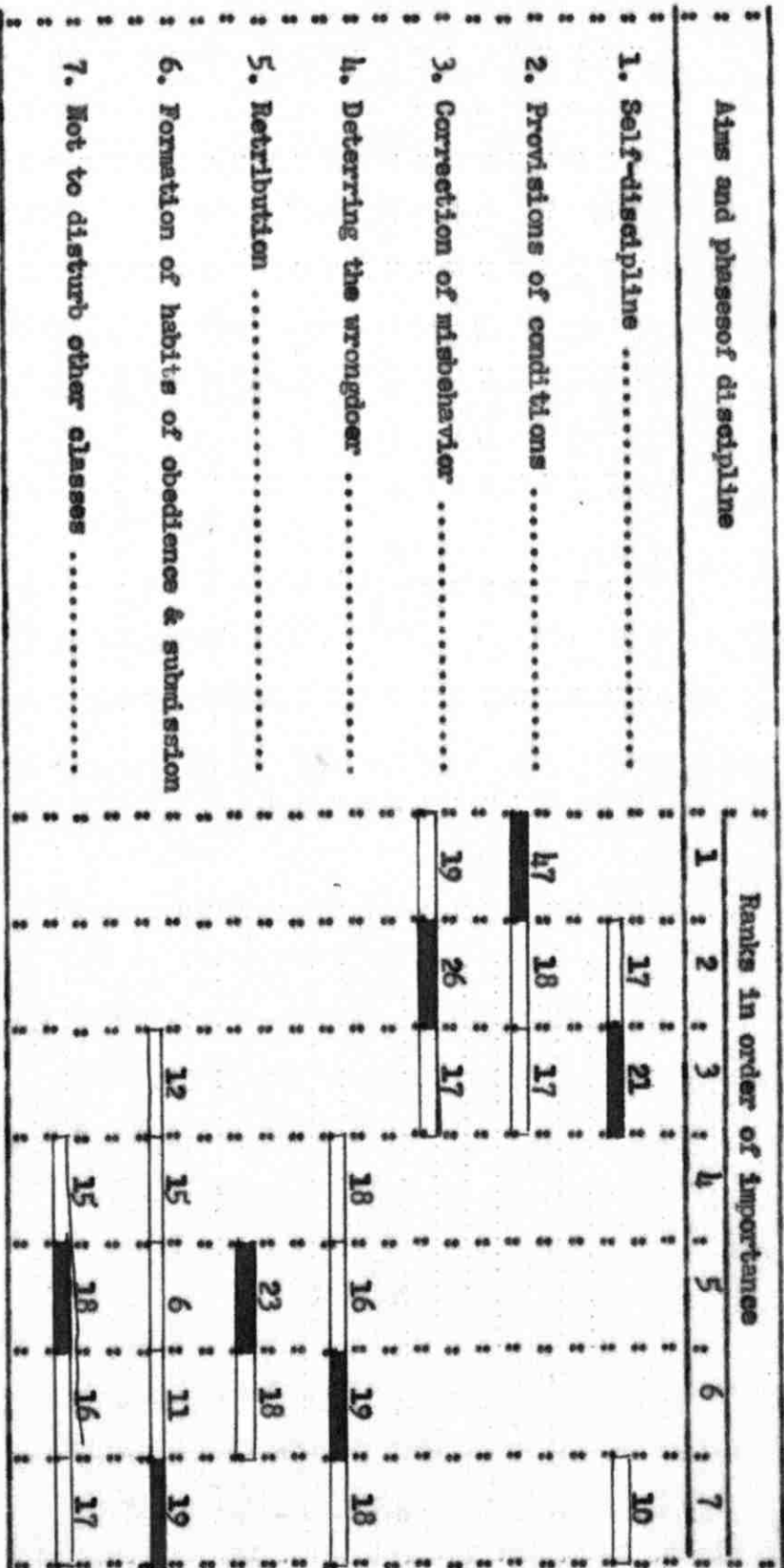


TABLE I - Ranking of Aims and Phases of Discipline in Order of Importance by 80 Teachers in Istanbul.

Aims and phases of discipline	R a n k s							Not reported
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. Self-discipline .....	4	17	21	8	9	9	10	2
2. Provisions of conditions helping students to acquire knowledge, ideals, habits conducive to their welfare and that of the group .....	47	18	7	2	2	2	0	2
3. Correction of misbehavior by making the student understand its personal and social harm .....	19	26	17	9	5	1	3	0
4. Detering the wrongdoer through fear of punishment .....	1	0	6	18	16	19	18	2
5. Retribution .....	2	3	7	14	23	18	11	2
6. Formation of habits of obedience and submission .....	7	8	12	15	6	11	19	2
7. Not to disturb other classes .....	1	4	8	15	18	16	17	1

Notes: The number in each column, before each item and below each rank, indicates the number of teachers rating the item in that rank.

Ratings of Table I are represented in the following chart:



Note: The number above each bar indicates the number of teachers out of 80, ranking the item in that rank.

about the narrowness of his school playground and the luxury of his office furniture while the school is very poor in teaching aids. Teachers feel the need for better changes that would make them more efficient in their work.

- 2) Next to the preventive, the remedial aspect had the favored position and ranged from rank one to three by 62 out of 80 teachers with the greatest number in the second rank.

Both previous rankings denote a progressive conception of discipline as preventive and remedial.

- 3) Deterrentism, retribution, submission to authority and non disturbance of other classes ranked in the lower half of the scale. Teachers deny them the place accredited to them for a long period of time. This indicates a considerable progress in disciplinary theory.
- 4) What place does self-discipline occupy in the minds of our teachers? Nearly half of them in Latakia ranked self-discipline in the second and third among other items. This is also a hopeful indication of progressive trend. These teachers do conceive that the pupil should lead himself in the future, but do not seem to have an idea about the democratic ways that lead to this end. Our school education does not permit students to learn self-discipline by practising it in situations

where they could make choices and take the responsibility for their actions. The majority of teachers did not grasp the meaning of self-discipline, because it seems that the term was vague and unfamiliar, although the writer explained in most schools what she meant by it.

To sum up, the views of the teachers' in Latakia on phases and functions of school control are on the whole progressive. However practice seems to lag behind theory. One would hope that in the course of time, practice will catch up with theory.

## 2. Actual Type of Control

Absolute, authoritarian control is the general feature in Syrian public elementary schools, although other types such as personal magnetism are found in a few cases.

Our students are compelled to sit still in their fixed seats, backs rigid, and in most girls' schools, hands interlaced and put on the desk or behind the back, or with their arms folded. Every movement of hands or legs is quickly observed by the teacher who draws the student's attention to it. No speech is allowed among pupils, no movement except when they are asked to recite or go to the blackboard. One interesting thing worthy of notice is that whenever some teachers allow children more freedom in movements, some supervisors disapprove of this practice. A supervisor in Damascus visited a class where the teacher allowed quiet speech.

The supervisor, while admiring the method of teaching, made the remark of loose discipline. Some up-to-date supervisors in Latakia, however, urge teachers to allow motion as well as a number of refreshing breaks during the lesson.

Pupils in most girls' schools bend their heads and put their hands behind their back while getting in and out of the classroom, in a very submissive attitude. When the writer asked a principal of a school for the reason of bending heads, she was told that this teaches them more respect to authority and to school regulations.

A general feature also is that when a person of authority or another teacher gets into the classroom, all the pupils stand up in one movement, and sometimes they are told to do so by the teacher, in a regimented, military manner. An example of military discipline was observed by the writer in one class in a boys school. When she entered one of the fourth grade divisions, the teacher told the class in a loud voice to stand up. The classroom had only one window looking on another room. It was dark inside and no electric light. The children had deadly faces, interlaced hands; they stood four pupils in one desk. Regimented manner of reciting lesson was followed by the teacher. He asked the pupils sitting in the first two desks to come near his chair. A line of eight pupils came before the class and began to recite the lesson, one after another. Then they turned back in one line to their desks. I do not object to the pupils' standing in the classroom as a sign of respect to

adult visitors; but what I do object to is the military manner of doing it.

Rules of conduct are imposed on the pupils either by official regulations or by principals and teachers. These rules are still harsh and do not allow the child freedom of expression or movement neither do they satisfy his physical and psychological needs. The teacher is the domineering person within the classroom. He makes demands on the pupils, gives orders and expects blind obedience. In general, teachers tend to use kindness in dealing with children in ordinary classroom life, but they are still far from the friendly home atmosphere. Barriers exist between teachers and pupils who still fear them rather than love and respect.

Education in primary schools is still on the whole of the academic bookish type. Character education so much stressed by official regulations, has, in actual practice, a minor position in relation to academic achievement toward which efforts of both pupils and teachers are directed. Stress upon academic knowledge and success in general examinations urge teachers to sacrifice character training. One Syrian educator compared our primary schools to factories producing children holding the "primary certificate". The organization of the schools, methods of teaching, the physical and educational facilities, and even teachers' status, stand in the way of effective positive moral education of children.

Our discipline, of course, has made a great shift toward more consideration of pupils' personalities and interests, but

still it is far from being based upon the concern for pupils' welfare. Teachers show more concern about overt acts than about passive traits detrimental to the students mental health. There is no evidence that teachers pay <sup>enough</sup> attention to symptoms of maladjustment in the pupils, or to their all-round development.

Negative aims of discipline occupy a great place. Our teachers try to correct negative traits, such as cheating, in their manner which on the whole is not in line with mental hygiene. Positive aims of character education are ignored. Teachers rarely work for instilling habits of helpfulness, cooperation, responsibility, initiative and honesty, except in theory and precept, mainly in teaching of "Morals" during the special class period of religious and moral instruction. Neither the school social life, nor activities or classroom procedures provide opportunities for the acquisition of positive character traits. The teachers themselves, in general, do not show some of these traits in their dealing with each other or with school principals and thus deny the students the practical example.

Punishment is still an important aspect of discipline. More will be said later on punishment, but it is appropriate here to notice that it is based upon repression of pupils' needs and welfare.

We may conclude here by saying that discipline in our schools tends to be autocratic and negative. It needs reinterpretation and a drift towards more consideration of interest and personal-

ities of the pupils. Preventive measures in particular need to receive greater attention.

### G. TYPES OF BEHAVIOR

In this section of the chapter, a general view will be given about types of behavior, teachers' attitudes toward them, their causes and suggestions for remedy or prevention. The subject will be dealt with under two main headings:

1. Types of behavior and teachers' attitudes,
2. Types of behavior, their causes and treatment.

#### 1. Types of Behavior & Teachers' Attitudes

Types of behavior were obtained mainly through teachers reports (Exp. II, Part I, Question 1), and Exp. II, Part I, Question 2 conducted in Damascus, and childrens' reports (Exp. II, Part II). Teachers' attitudes were obtained from several sources, namely, Exp. II, Part I, Question 2, and Exp. I, Part IV.

In the following pages, a description of some of these parts of the experiments will be given with the interpretation of their results.

##### a) Some types of behavior and teachers' attitudes

Knowledge about some types of behavior and attitudes of teachers toward them were obtained by Experiment II, Part I, Question 2. This source aimed at having information about the degree of occurrence of types of behavior and indirectly of



teachers' attitudes toward them. With this intention, the writer (1) devised a schedule containing a list of twenty types of behavior. The schedule was devised according to a similar one administered by Wickman (2) in the U.S.A. in 1928. These types represent various forms of evasion and escape mechanisms, such as shyness, unsocial; aggressive tendencies; and immoralities, such as stealing and obscenity. One hundred teachers in Damascus who answered experiment II, Part I, filled in the schedule. They were told by the experimenter that the aim was a knowledge of the extent of occurrence of each behavior trait and that ratings should be based on their actual observation in the school. Teachers rated the degree of occurrence of each item on a four-point-scale "does not occur - occurs in some pupils - in a great number of pupils - in all." The same conditions of anonymity as in Experiment I insured their frankness.

Results are represented in Table II.

It is needless to say that data gathered by this schedule are not an accurate evaluation of occurrence of types of behavior, because of the subjectivity in ratings and their dependence upon teachers' attitudes toward these types. Ratings reflect the emotional conflicts of teachers, their reaction to their jobs and the effect of disciplinary methods on their children's behavior.

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(1) See Appendix, Experiment II, Part I, Question 2.

(2) Wickman, E.K., "Children's Behavior and Teachers' Attitudes", Commonwealth Fund, New York, 1928.

TABLE II - Ratings on Occurrence of Types of Behavior, by 100 Public Primary School Teachers in Damascus.

Type of behavior	57 men teachers					43 women teachers					Total of teachers reporting occurrence	Percentage of teachers reporting occurrence.
	Does not occur	Occurs in some pupils	Occurs in a great number of students	In all	Total	Does not occur	Occurs in some pupils	Occurs in a great number of students	In all	Total		
1. Laziness	1	49	7	0	57	2	29	12	0	41	98	98%
2. Tardiness	2	53	2	0	55	6	30	7	0	37	92	92%
3. Lying	5	33	13	5	51	6	29	8	0	37	88	88%
4. Inattention in classroom	7	43	5	0	48	6	33	3	1	37	85	85%
5. Fearfulness	5	27	21	3	51	11	22	10	0	32	83	83%
6. Whispering in classroom	5	34	14	3	51	15	22	5	1	28	79	79%
7. Cheating, deceit	9	41	8	0	48	13	25	5	0	30	78	78%
8. Talkativeness	10	35	10	1	46	14	20	7	2	29	75	75%
9. Bullying	10	39	7	1	47	20	16	6	0	22	69	69%
10. Shyness	18	32	6	0	38	12	30	0	0	30	68	68%
11. Overcritical of others	15	28	9	3	40	23	13	6	0	19	59	59%
12. Stealing	29	26	0	0	26	15	28	0	0	28	54	54%
13. Resentfulness	19	33	2	1	36	29	9	3	2	14	50	50%
14. Obscene talk	17	33	6	0	39	33	9	0	0	9	48	48%
15. Destroying school material	20	34	1	0	35	30	11	2	0	13	48	48%
16. Easily discouraged	30	20	4	0	24	22	14	5	0	19	43	43%
17. Insolence	31	24	1	0	25	30	13	0	0	13	38	38%
18. Disobedience	31	24	0	0	24	29	13	1	0	14	38	38%
19. Truancy	27	29	0	0	29	38	5	0	0	5	34	34%
20. Unsocial	35	20	0	0	20	38	5	0	0	5	25	25%

The results show that all the previously mentioned types of behavior occur in our primary schools to a greater or lesser extent, and as Table II shows, most items were reported to happen sometimes. A glance at Table II makes it clear that these types of behavior fall into three series according to the percentages of the teachers reporting them.

The first series reported to occur at least sometimes by over 75% of teachers in Damascus consists of laziness, tardiness, inattention during the lesson, whispering in class, talkativeness, fearfulness, lying, cheating and deceit. These types belong to two categories. First, the first five are more observed because they constitute obstacles and frustrations to teachers' purposes and educational achievement. Teachers are pressed by the necessity of completing the courses of study prescribed by the Ministry of Education and of preparing students for the final examinations. Therefore, laziness, tardiness, whispering, talking in class and inattention interfere with the profit to be gained from every minute of the class period. Second, the last two traits, lying and cheating, are recognized because they are against the moral ideals of teachers and constitute offenses against their personal integrity.

Teachers' rating of fearfulness is specially significant. Fearfulness is rated by one-third of them to occur in a great number of students. This indicates that fear is common in elementary and primary schools and is a sign of autocratic absolute control and harsh disciplinary methods of those reporters.

The second series of behavior reported to occur sometimes by more than half of the teachers consists of bullying, overcritical of others, resentfulness, stealing and shyness. These may be divided into two categories: the aggressive and the withdrawing. The latter is represented only in shyness. Aggressive forms are recognized, because they are easily observable and constitute offenses against teachers and their moral beliefs. At the same time, they indicate the existence of frustrating situations within the life of the school or outside. Damascus teachers' recognition of shyness shows that they pay attention to it and realize its implications for the future welfare of the child.

The third series of behavior which is recognized by one-fourth of the teachers consists of obscene talks, insolence, truancy, disobedience, destroying school materials, easily discouraged and unsocial.

It seems that truancy, insolence and disobedience occur rarely. Disobedience is reported by only 38% of the teachers to occur sometimes, and is considered by the teachers in Latakia among the most serious types of behavior. <sup>(1)</sup> The infrequency of its occurrence as well as the teachers' rating of its seriousness are probably due to its direct connection with the teachers' authority. Unquestioned obedience is required as an inherent characteristic of absolute control. The same is true of insolence.

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(1) See Infra., Table III.

The two withdrawing traits, that is easily discouraged and unsocial are less observed. Easy discouragement is more recognized than being unsocial, because of its relation to the instruction of students and may obstruct it. The unsocial child is the least remarked. This shows that primary school teachers notice overt acts more than passive, negative behavior, as is confirmed by teachers' ranking of unsocialness among the least serious traits.

So much for the results regardless of sex differences. A glance over Table II clearly shows that laziness, tardiness, bullying, obscenity, destroying school materials, truancy and unsocialness seem to be more frequent in boys' schools than in girls' schools. The opposite is the case with stealing as will be seen in section 2.

b) Teachers' views on the seriousness of types of behavior.

Teachers' views on the seriousness of some types of behavior were obtained by Experiment I, Part IV. The idea of this part of the Experiment was borrowed from Wickman <sup>(1)</sup> who gave a list of fifty items of behavior to 511 teachers in the U.S.A. in 1928, in order to rate them according to the degree of seriousness. Wickman compared their ratings with the ratings of thirty clinicians, which showed a significant difference from the mental hygiene point of view. This part of the experiment was planned after Wickman's.

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(1) Wickman, E.K., op. cit., p. 92.

but on a smaller scale.

Eighty teachers in Latakia were given thirteen types of behavior in an unarranged form and were asked to arrange them into three categories according to their degree of seriousness by putting (1) before each type belonging to the most serious series, and (2) before the lesser serious, and (3) before the least serious. The items were as follows:

Cheating	Resentfulness
Cruelty and bullying	Shyness
Destroying school materials	Stealing
Disobedience	Tardiness at school
Obscene notes & talk	Truancy
Overcritical of others	Unsocial
Untruthfulness	

The experimenter had in mind the evaluation of teachers' attitudes and their customary habits of thinking about and reacting to the occurrence of troublesome forms of behavior, in order to compare their ratings with those of mental hygienists obtained by Wickman. But this fact was not revealed to the teachers concerned. They were merely told that the idea was to secure their help in evaluating the seriousness of the previously mentioned traits. Unlimited time was given for the whole experiment, but as the questionnaires were very long and teachers turned back the answers the next day, they could not have time for rationalization. Their immediate reactions to problems were secured, as represented in Table III.

TABLE III - Ratings of Seriousness of Types of Behavior, by 80 teachers in Latakia, compared by Clinicians.

Type of behavior	Teachers' Rating				Rating of majority of teachers	Clinicians' rating
	1	2	3	Uncertain		
1. Bullying, Cruelty	21	59	19	1	2	1
2. Overcritical of others	5	34	59	2	3	1
3. Resentfulness	19	48	33	0	2	1
4. Unsocial	6	34	55	5	3	1
5. Cheating	90	10	0	0	1	2
6. Obscene talks and notes	64	35	1	0	1	2
7. Lying - untruthfulness	83	15	1	1	1	2
8. Shyness	15	40	40	5	2 or 3	2
9. Stealing	89	9	2	0	1	2
10. Truancy	34	46	18	2	2	2
11. Destroying school materials	11	45	44	0	2	3
12. Disobedience	69	24	6	1	1	3
13. Tardiness at school	10	35	51	4	3	3

Note: The numbers in the first three columns, before each item represent the percentage of teachers ranking that item in that rank.

Table III shows the thirteen types of behavior arranged into three categories in order of seriousness according to mental hygienists, the percentages of teachers ranging each item into each category, and the highest rank for each item given by teachers and mental hygienists.

Wickman compared the ratings of his two groups of professionals with a view to their professional interests. Teachers are naturally concerned with educational achievements whereas psychological clinicians look on these traits in terms of their effect on the future life and adjustment of the child.

In general, the results show that the attitudes of teachers in Latakia toward children's behavior do not differ greatly from those obtained by Wickman, but our teachers show more progressiveness and their ratings were nearer to those of clinicians in four types; namely, bullying and cruelty, resentfulness, truancy and destroying school materials.

The findings suggest as Wickman says that teachers' reactions to behavior problems in children are determined in direct relation to the immediate effect of the behavior upon the teachers. Those problems that transgress teachers' moral sensitiveness and authority and frustrate their immediate teaching purposes are regarded more serious than problems which affect, for the most part, only the welfare of the individual child.<sup>(1)</sup>

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(1) Ibid., p. 116.



Teachers consider cheating, stealing, lying, obscene talks and notes and disobedience the most serious, because they represent immoralities and transgressions against their personal authority. Whereas, mental hygienists consider immoralities second in the order of seriousness.

Bullying and cruelty, being overcritical of others, unsocial and resentfulness, both of the aggressive and withdrawing types are not considered of first importance by teachers, because they do not interfere with their educational achievements and because they are not concerned with behavior traits affecting student future welfare. To mental hygienists those traits are extremely serious for the child's future adjustment.

Truancy is given the same degree of seriousness by both teachers and clinicians, because of its relation to moralities and it might lead to delinquency. Furthermore it is the type of behavior that is much feared by parents.

Tardiness at school had the same rating by teachers and mental hygienists, both consider it harmless to children's personality, especially that its causes are often beyond the child's control.

Our teachers pay more attention to overt, undesirable acts than to the negative type. The unsocial child who does not disturb their classes is rarely recognized, and little attention is paid to the causes of his maladjustment. This is confirmed by the findings previously mentioned in the teachers' reports on

occurrence of behavior. Shyness is considered serious, as it had already/<sup>been</sup> pointed out, and teachers agree with mental hygienists on its import to the pupil's welfare.

Mental hygienists, as opposed to teachers, give more importance to withdrawing recessive personality traits than to dishonesties and immoralities. Transgression against authority or violation of orderliness in class, such as talkativeness, whispering and destroying school materials rank lowest in the list.

To sum up, we are justified to claim that results of this experiment are compatible with those of Experiment II, Part I, Question 2. Both show that personal problems of children are subordinate to those interfering with teaching and classroom management. The overt and directly annoying conduct is more recognized and considered more serious than the inner emotional conflicts of children.

Teachers' attitudes reflect their emotional conflicts, their reactions to their jobs and frustrations in their life within the school and outside. Teachers' attitudes should be reeducated. They should realize that the chief aim of education as the all-round development of the child, makes it imperative for them to pay greater attention to those unhappy, shy and unsocial children, as well as to their treatment of problem behavior. This end cannot be reached if the emotional frustrations of teachers are not removed. Improving the school conditions and teachers' status and education will be discussed later. It may be justifiably said now that the teachers should be well-adjusted persons in order to be able to take on the sacred responsibility of children's education.

## 2. Types of Behavior, Their Causes and Treatment

Types of behavior obtained through both children and teachers' reported cases are represented below, according to the degree of their frequency. A brief discussion of each trait, its causes and suggestions for prevention and treatment will be given.

### 1) Moral Transgressions

Stealing and borrowing

Lying

Cheating and copying

Obscenity

Sex problems

Talebearing

Counterfeit

### 2) Breaking classroom rules

Disorderliness

Talking and whispering

Laughing and jokes

Making noise

Quarrels and arguments

Interruption

Restlessness

Passing notes

Eating in class

Playing in class

Inattention and daydreaming

3) Physical attacks and rough play

Bullying and beating

Rough play and throwing others on the ground

4) Breaking school regulations

Tardiness

Late return from recess

Truancy and leaving without permission

Ignoring directions on the school yard

Property damage

5) Shortcomings in school work

Laziness

Poor work

Irresponsibility

6) Undesirable personality traits

a) Aggressive traits

Contrariness

Resentfulness

Overcritical of others

Impoliteness

b) Negativistic, withdrawing traits

Fearfulness

Easily discouraged

Timidity, shyness

Unsocial

6) b) Continued

Unacceptable social manners

Lack of emotional control

Temper tantrums

Unusual nervous reactions

7) Transgressions against authority

Disobedience

Disrespect to authority

Attacks on teachers

8) Accidents

9) No reported behavior.

1) Moral transgressions

Moral transgressions are the most reported behavior traits.

Cheating

Cheating is the most prevailing type of moral transgression and is reported mostly by women teachers. 8 teachers and 13 pupils, mostly girls, mentioned cheating, and 78% of teachers in Damascus reported that some of their pupils cheat.

Cheating takes the form of copying from others in daily exercises as well as in quizzes and examinations. Teachers indicate that pupils cheat when correcting dictation from the blackboard, or may present one homework instead of another, es-

pecially in arithmetic problem solving, or pupils may have homework done for them by a member of the family. Sometimes, ingenious ways of copying are invented, especially in examinations. A pupil reported to have copied from his neighbour by means of slips of paper and rulers. Precautions and preparations are taken before the examination time. A pupil may write notes and remarks on slips of paper he brings with him, or on some hidden part of the body, such as legs, or on his clothes, or on the desk. Pupils sometimes secure the help of others, through an open window, where another person can prompt them. Usually, cheating in tests is the result of agreement between two neighbours, that is mutual help in different subject matters, e.g., one may pass to another a solved arithmetic problem, while the other helps in a history test. Group cheating, or cheating on the part of a whole class may happen.

Unfortunately, this kind of deceit is not confined to elementary and primary school students. It is a general feature in secondary schools and even in the University. Its occurrence in higher institutions of learning might be due, among other causes, to previously acquired habits or to the neglect of its correction by primary school teachers. It takes place in spite of severe supervision during examinations and in spite of warning attempters of being put out of the room.

Cheating, in general, results from the failure of the pupil to cope with school academic requirements. It becomes more frequent when there is a discrepancy between the pupil's capacity

and the academic standards. A pupil with a high level of aspiration, but of low mental ability or academic achievement, is led to copy from others in order to rise to his level of aspiration. Other reasons for copying are apparent in children's papers. The desire to do well or to excel is among common motives to copying. Sometimes lack of self-confidence may be a reason. One pupil reported that he gave the teacher a homework done by a classmate in order not to be considered lazy. His notebook had been lost and the father had refused to replace it. His desire to satisfy the teacher and save his reputation as an industrious boy, together with his father's neglect led him to cheat.

The type of examination in Syrian schools and emphasis on grades are mostly responsible for cheating. Examinations in Syria are rigid, severe and above the pupils' mental capacities. They dominate school education. <sup>(1)</sup> Both students and teachers are over-concerned about them and strive toward success in them. They are the crowning end of the efforts of both parties concerned, and failure to pass is considered a failure for both.

Studies have shown that cheating depends upon teachers and pupils' relations. It is less when these relations are free and cordial and a spirit of cooperation is found. <sup>(2)</sup> In the light

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(1) See Supra, p. 40.

(2) Hartshorne Hugh and May, Mark A, "Studies in Deceit", Macmillan Company, New York, 1928, Chapter XXIII.

of these findings, one is right to claim that cheating in our schools might have among its causes the lack of cordial, friendly relations between teachers and pupils, as well as frustrations in the children's lives.

Primary school teachers' treatment of cheating consists mainly in lowering the marks of the cheater, as it will be shown in the section on methods of correction.<sup>(1)</sup> Their treatment is, on the whole, uneducative. Few are those who search for causes and try to remedy them.

Causes of cheating should be removed or lessened. The problem of examinations will be dealt with later, because it is beyond the teacher's control. But the teacher should always ask himself: What is the cause of cheating? Is it the inefficiency of the pupil? If it is, he should arrange for special coaching and remedial work, either by doing it himself or by asking a stronger pupil to help the weaker child. The teacher should strengthen self-confidence and self-reliance in pupils. On the other hand, he should try to discover the remote causes, the hidden difficulties by studying the child, his health, his home environment and thus try to remedy the causes of cheating.

#### Stealing and borrowing

Stealing is one of the moral transgressions mentioned most by teachers. 16% gave anecdotes about theft. It seems from

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(1) See Infra, p. 100.



the study that girls steal more than boys; 12 out of 43 women teachers reported cases of stealing, whereas only 4 out of 57 men teachers did. These findings are confirmed by the results on teachers' ratings of degree of occurrence of stealing, showing that it is more prevalent in girls' schools than in boys'.<sup>(1)</sup>

Stolen materials, according to the experiment, consist of money and objects. Stolen money varies in amount from half a pound to twelve pounds. It is usually spent in buying school materials, such as pencils, fountain pens, or eatable things. Pupils may steal school materials from others, mostly fountain pens, or sweets or lunches.

Stealing arises from a great variety of causes. It is exceedingly complicated in origin. Shaffer states that not one single factor in any one case, but a wealth of contributing causes underlies the conduct.<sup>(2)</sup>

Cases reported show that the most common cause for stealing is poverty. Children of poor families resort to stealing money or materials in order to obtain material required for the school. Frustrated needs account for stealing. Children have the desire for property, and the desire to be on a par with school mates and to have what they have. A woman teacher said: "A girl stole a red fountain pen from her neighbour, just because she wanted to have a

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(1) See Supra, p. 44.

(2) Shaffer, Laurance Frederic, "The Psychology of Adjustment", Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, 1936, p. 116.

red one like her friend's." When one realizes how urgent the child's need is for satisfying his physical needs as other children do, one will be more tolerant toward the poor pupil who takes another pupil's lunch. Poverty in our communities is also one of the main sources of other types of delinquencies, and is a great obstacle to character education and the development of healthy personality traits.

Other environmental and family factors are mentioned by teachers. They reported that the family financial conditions and marital status had their effects on stealing. Cases of broken homes, or divorced parents with the ensuing neglect of the child's physical and psychological needs were reported by some teachers.

From the point of view of the psychology of adjustment, Sherman (1934) distinguished three principal types of motivation basic to stealing and lying. First, as has already been indicated, stealing and lying is caused by the desire to be on a par with playmates. Second, to gain attention. Third, stealing and lying as emotional outlets for conflicts and for other adjustment difficulties. <sup>(1)</sup> The first and second classes and some cases of the third may be considered as defensive adjustments.

One girl was reported as a chronic case of stealing. In the mother's opinion, the reason was probably that her girl was one-footed. One case was due to harsh parental treatment. She

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(1) Ibid., p. 166.

was an orphan living with her severe seventy-year old grandmother, who did not adequately meet the affection and security needs of the girl.

Stealing is sometimes due to hatred or jealousy engendering revenge. A pupil may steal because he hates another or is jealous of him and wants to revenge himself by putting suspicion on the hated fellow.

Stealing is an individual or group problem. One can steal by himself or cooperate with a gang. Gangs of robbers are occasionally found in Syrian schools. In this case, imitation and the influence of schoolmates play their part.

In connection with theft, indebtedness has been stated. Girls bought sweets and objects from shops without paying for them. Teachers should pay attention and see that pupils depart from such a habit.

Now we come to a consideration of teachers' attitudes toward stealing and their treatment of it.

From the cases reported by teachers, we have the evidence of sympathetic understanding on their part. They comprehend that chronic cases can usually be traced back to insignificant beginnings. Pupils start by pilfering things and sums of money and in course of time, the habit is acquired. Teachers understand the necessity of paying attention to beginnings of theft. They follow different methods in order to discover the one who steals. Some use threats of suspension, others promise not to punish if the culprit confesses,

others still follow a private questioning of the suspected pupil, or a public inquiry into the problem.

Teachers are unanimous in using no punishment whatsoever in such cases. They content themselves with explaining to the pupil the undesirability of the act, its evil consequences for himself and the social group. It is acceptable to tell the culprit about the future state of those who steal, the disapproval of others, and to create in the child the emotional disposition to do to others what he would like them to do to him, and refrain from doing to them what he would not like them to do to him. In other words, appeal to social approval and disapproval and giving intellectual reasons are preferable to moralizing. Some teachers rely greatly on religious teaching in instilling desirable traits and correcting undesirable ones. They remind those who steal of Hell and of God's anger. This method is undoubtedly effective, but the element of fear in education is not wholesome. Secularization of moral education does away with fear and opens the way to clear thinking, to weighing of values and to rationality as regulators of conduct.

It is a sound practice not to publicize the act of stealing, while taking positive measures to heal the case. Telling the child before the group that he has stolen and he should not do it again, is detrimental to his future adjustment and frustrates his need for others' respect, even if no other punishment is used. A private conference with the student is preferable.

Furthermore, explaining and appealing to reason do not

remedy the causes. Positive measures should be taken. The case should be studied, its causes discovered and those who influence the little thief detected. Poverty must be done away with, and this is beyond the teacher's job. It should be the concern of society. Here, it is pertinent to say that teachers sometimes try to remedy the situation partially by providing some poor pupils with small necessities, such as fountain pens and notebooks bought with the money of the classroom "cooperative box". Necessities are given to the pupils concerned either directly or as a reward for excelling in one or another school subject. Nevertheless, these cases are rare.

Frustrated needs should be satisfied. Our teachers are usually wise in discussing the problem with parents and making clear to them their duty in offering their children facilities and enough pocket money. Whenever possible, the schools should provide free meals and free school materials. If the child steals because of lack of attention, it is better to show interest in him and give him a chance to excel in some activity so as to win the attention needed in a normal way.

The child does not take away things belonging to those whom he cherishes and loves. Improving our manner of dealing with children and giving them affection, may be good antidotes to stealing.

### Lying

Lying is another type of deceit. There is a close rela-

tion between the three types of behavior, lying, cheating and stealing; they are mostly found in the same individual. Lying is common in students and is reported by 88% of Damascus teachers.

Lying is a symptom of significance mainly because of the motives underlying it. In connection with motives, several types of lying are distinguished and should be recognized by teachers. Imaginative lying and lying resulting from confusion between reality and fancy are natural and harmless. Pretension or lying in order to satisfy the need for recognition, or to compensate for inferiority feelings happens especially when the child's social status is below his peer's. <sup>(1)</sup> The child may pretend that he is ill, or that he is persecuted by others so as to seek affection. Motives to lying were mentioned previously in connection with stealing. A student lies in order to escape severe punishments, especially where they are greatly used. In most of the cases reported, lying is due to a desire to escape punishment, to avoid shame, or to win some rewards. One teacher told of a pupil who lied to his father by accusing his teacher of slapping him on the head and injuring him. In the teacher's opinion, the pupil's motive was to escape from school; for he was of low mental ability and incapable of getting along with school work.

One kind of defense lying is the lie of loyalty when the child lies to those in authority, whether teachers or parents, in

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(1) القوي ، عبد العزيز ، " أسس الصحة النفسية " مطبعة لجنة التأليف والترجمة والنشر ، القاهرة ، ١٩٤٦ ، ص ٢٦٦

order to protect another child from anticipated punishment. Sometimes a child lies in order to get others punished and thus revenge himself; the cause is jealousy resulting from favoritism on the part of the teacher.

The habit of untruthfulness is often built when lies are neglected from the start. A pupil usually learns to be a liar by imitating adult liars around him. One teacher realized that a father urged his boy to lie by advancing wrong excuses for tardiness at school. This teacher is right in saying, "Should we punish the child or those adult chronic liars who teach him to lie?" Under such circumstances, are we justified in holding the student responsible for his misbehavior?

Now what can the teacher do in cases of lying? Some writers on the subject advise the teacher to follow some suggestions. Abdel Aziz El Kuci says that the teacher should always study the type of lying, and see whether it is rare or habitual on the part of the pupil. <sup>(1)</sup> If habitual what are the motives. He should in each case remedy the motives not the symptoms. No unwise punishment should be used, such as beating or scolding, or publicizing. The teacher who was reported in this study to have compelled a pupil to stand before the student body and confess he was a liar neglected entirely the detrimental effect of publicizing on the pupil's mental health. The teacher should detect beginnings

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القاضي، عبد العزيز "أسس الصحة النفسية" ص ٢٧٢

of lying and lead the pupil to confess, not by coercion, but by kindness and persuasion. To force a liar to confess is an incentive to further untruthfulness. To punish him after confessing and telling the truth minimizes the value of truthfulness in his estimation. Frankness appears wherever an atmosphere of mutual give and take replaces autocratic rules. Affection and love must replace authority, severity and punishment. When the child lies because of inferiority feelings, we should provide him with activities, in which he can excel and get the recognition and admiration of others. Adults should set a good example of truthfulness before children and refrain from lying or making absurd promises.

#### Talebearing and Counterfeit

Talebearing and counterfeit are other types of deceit and have similar motives as stealing, lying and cheating.

Counterfeit is reported in a few cases. One pupil, as a teacher said, counterfeited an excuse on the part of his father for being absent without permission. The direct motive was fear from being punished; the real causes were personal deficiencies in school work.

Talebearing and slander are more frequent. The author, while supervising teaching practice, observed in a first elementary grade striking habits of talebearing. Constant calumny made the lesson impossible. Girls reported that neighbors are laughing, or pulling their hairs, or reading, or sleeping, or chewing gum and pretended to have their things taken away. The teacher seemed



to be blind and deaf ignoring all tales. When the turn of teaching came to the students of the Teacher Training School, they were advised by the author to make some remarks to the class. In fact, the student told the class that they should not report anything, that she notices all behavior on the part of the pupils, that it is not nice to report about others and that she likes them all, especially those who do not report. At the same time, a more attractive procedure in teaching was followed. Talebearing decreased, though the habit was difficult to be broken altogether. To the author, the main cause was constant change of class teacher. The teacher was on leave on account of prolonged illness, and the substitutes alternating in her place did not prevent the building up of the habit. Moreover, the pupils belonged to a very poor community where the standards of behavior were not particularly high.

#### Sex Problems

Rare occurrences of sexual curiosity and play are obtained from teachers' reports. Cases of homosexuality, heterosexuality and masturbation are reported.

Some teachers consider sex curiosity and play as a natural activity and impulse, while others consider them as bad inclinations learned from a corrupt environment. In either case, the teachers on the whole tried to remedy the situation with tolerance and understanding without the use of penalties. Few teachers were indignant and showed an extremely severe attitude, expelling the pupil from school in order to protect the group against corruption.

Sex curiosity and play are parts of the growing-up process. All cases reported were harmless. Sex problems are sometimes symptoms of emotional maladjustment and hidden conflicts. They constitute a kind of release to the child from frustrations and adult suppression. The causes should be removed and the teacher should redirect the pupil's interest into constructive channels, and discover or develop in him interest in reading or writing or drawing, or any other hobby. Discussion of the problem with parents or change of school is helpful.

Adult sex perversion could sometimes be traced to normal childhood and adolescence sexual play. Our society is suffering from sexual attacks and perversion. The school should partake in social reform by remedying cases from the start. If the school rejects children and refuses to reform them, sex criminality will increase.

Obscene talks and notes, a disguise for this tabooed sexual interest, are also rare and ranked first in the degree of seriousness by teachers and second by clinicians. Redirection of pupils' interests into better channels is to be preferred to the use of severe punishments.

## 2) Breaking Classroom Rules

### Talking and whispering in class

Talking is reported by pupils more than by teachers, and seems to be a common trait in schools. 79% of teachers in Damascus mentioned it in the list and 19 teachers stated that it

occurs in a great number of cases. It seems that teachers do not consider talking and whispering as serious as moral transgressions but consider it a natural tendency when it does not disturb others. In fact, children and adolescents like to communicate their ideas and feelings to others. Talking is then a normal activity, or it may be a sign of a desire to receive attention. For the most part, it represents the need to borrow some objects from neighbors. Sometimes it is due to lack of interest in the lesson due to unattractive materials and dull methods of teaching. The lesson might be above the mental level of the child.

Punishments given for talking vary. Among the most common is writing such lines as "I should not talk in class". Talking may be remedied by simple control; a look to invite the attention of the talker will do. Sometimes removing him from his seat is better. Chronic talkers should not be seated near each other. The talkative child is best at ease when given some activity that needs talking, e.g., making speeches and reciting poetry. Methods of teaching should stress students' participation. The discussion method decreases the need for constant speech. Modern teachers in our schools favor giving the class more than one break of one or two minutes each during a class period.

Whispering is inevitable and takes place even when forbidden. A girl said, "We were told that we should not whisper in class and threatened with severe punishment if we did. When the teacher caught a friend of mine whispering in class, she punished

her harshly by depriving her from participation in lesson discussions for several days." When whispering does not interfere with school work, especially when moving in or out of the room, preparing materials for work and taking things out of desks, it should be ignored.

### Laughing and jokes

Jokes of different kinds take place in the classroom. Sometimes they are signs of boredom, or of a sense of humour, but are rarely an indication of resentment against the pupil victim. One girl wrote that she pricked her neighbour with a needle, just in order to laugh on a very hot afternoon period. Our primary classes tend to be severe and to kill the spirit of cheerfulness. Teachers do not allow jokes and laughter and when they do occur, they meet them with punishment. Jokes should be encouraged every now and then; they throw an atmosphere of joy in the classroom, after which pupils are ready to work again, and return to a quiet state. Capable teachers do not have to fear children's laughter; it does not decrease the children's respect for them. On the contrary, it makes for a more friendly atmosphere and strengthens the pupils' love for their teachers.

### Noise and confusion

Noises and confusions sometimes happen, especially with beginning teachers, or when the teacher is out of the room. They might be a sign of autocratic control when pupils feel the need to

relieve the tension under the suppressive atmosphere. Noises are usually group action. The troublemakers should be located and removed from others. Teachers should always remember that when the class is working on interesting activities, there will be no room for noise.

### Inattention

Inattention has several causes. The physiological state of the child has its influence, for the ill child is unable to concentrate. Children's minds may wander when the lesson is difficult, or too easy, or uninteresting. Dull students as well as bright ones may not pay attention to the lesson. Inattention as such does not exist; it is rather attention to something other than what is going on in the class; such as daydreaming about some past or future trip.

Causes of inattention may be discovered and remedied. Usually, a word, or a look, or calling the child's name may bring back to the lesson the wandering mind. A question asked to the inattentive calls him to the world of reality. The teacher should not consider inattention a personal offense but should ask himself whether his method of teaching is efficient; he should not be angry and punish the child. He should be skillful in discovering the inattentive from those who may seem to be extremely interested in the lesson, with a flash of understanding in their eyes.

### Eating in class

Eating in class is not rare; children eat oranges, sweets or chew gum. It mirrors lack of manners and boredom. Sometimes the eating pupils pass unnoticed, at other times they are severely punished. To deprive pupils of these things with proper explanation is sufficient. The teacher should always remind himself that he may be the main cause of such misbehavior.

### 3) Physical Attacks & Rough Play

Physical attacks and rough play are very common in our primary and elementary schools, and are reported by 41 out of 116 pupils, mostly boys who reported incidents of bullying, fighting with others, attacking others and throwing them on the ground.

Bullying begins usually with a disagreement and discussion about a problem, e.g. is studying better than playing at recess? or with disputes in games, or with mere practical jokes and play, such as throwing water on each other's face. Pupils report throwing others on the playground or in the pool; or by tripping others while running. A considerable number of reporters confess to have done it on purpose to harm their playmates. Real injury sometimes results as the attacked boy may bleed in some part of the body.

Physical attacks stem from two general sources. First, the need of children to release surplus physical energy. Second, they may be symptoms of inner frustrations. This second source accounts mainly for bullying. The frequency of bullying and harmful

physical attacks is probably due to suppression of children within the classroom. <sup>(1)</sup> Teachers must have in mind that fighting may be a channel by which the pupil gets what he desires, and a means of revenge. It is sometimes natural with the boy who wants to display his muscular strength.

Physical attacks are met with harsh penalties, such as suspension of the pupil for three days, or lowering standing. In most cases, these punishments did not work, but also, were the cause of further fighting.

As an immediate measure, a conference with the pupil is helpful, in which dangers of attacks are explained. A necessary preventive measure is to provide conditions for physical outlets of energy. <sup>(2)</sup> Gymnastics and physical games are badly needed in our schools. Boxing games between matches may be organized under a referee.

#### 4) Breaking School Regulations

Under this heading come unexcused absences, such as tardiness, truancy, leaving without permission.

##### Tardiness

Common observation and teachers' estimates show that tardiness is common, especially in the first morning hour and in

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(1) See footnote on p. 9, and Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippitt, and Ralph K. White, "Patterns of Aggressive Behavior in Experimentally Created 'Social Climates'", J. Soc. Psychol. 1939, X, pp. 271-299.

(2) Gutts, Norma E., and Moseley, Nicholas., op. cit., p. 85.

winter time when pupils are detained at home by rain. The same pupils are nearly always late. Those pupils who live near the school might be late as well as those living far from it, often because they are late to rise or to have breakfast, or because they are indifferent. Instances are obtained when pupils are late because they have no clocks at home. This is especially true of children in the low economic group.

Occasional tardiness is a shortcoming but not an unpardonable sin. Pupils must not be severely punished for being late. Some teachers keep pupils who are late outside the room for the whole period, or allow them to enter with a word of advice or reproof. When a pupil comes late, he should be allowed to enter and a conference with him will take place later. For chronic cases, it is effective to assign responsibilities, or early morning duties, such as caring for the cleanliness of the classroom, bringing chalk etc.... This would induce the child to come earlier. One teacher cured a case by asking a neighbor to pass by and accompany him to school. Exciting class work in the first morning hour is an antidote to tardiness. Motivation of school work makes pupils eager to come early.

### Truancy

Truancy rarely occurs, because teachers and parents are careful about pupils' attendance. Pupils cannot escape punishment

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(1) Ibid., p. 97.



and are easily detected when playing truant, for, they have to present their guardian's excuses for their absences. The community itself disapproves of it and teachers consider it serious.

Many factors lead to truancy; following are some of them:

- 1) Usually, the lack of desire to attend school, as Paul Landis said, is likely to be symptomatic of educational maladjustments. <sup>(1)</sup> The difficulty of lessons and lack of interest made one child flee from school and go to the movies. Fear of teacher and harsh discipline are mentioned by a boy who went to a near garden instead of going to school. Lack of authority at home is another factor.
- 2) Truancy is often not an individual offense. It brings into question the character of the child's play group or the gang. <sup>(2)</sup> Imitation of peers accounts sometimes for leaving school to another place where the gang learns petty delinquencies.

Truancy should not be ignored, because its secretive nature makes certain kinds of delinquency easy. It may be regarded as the kindergarten of delinquency. Therefore doing away with truancy is to take a long step in the direction of doing away with delinquency.

Our teachers deal differently with truants. Wise were

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(1) Landis, Paul H., "Adolescence and Youth", McGraw Hill Company, New York, 1947, p. 220.

(2) Ibid., p. 221.

those who did not punish but discussed the problem with parents. Others reported harsh penalty. One boy told of three days of suspension and lowering conduct marks; another of flogging before the student body. Some teachers appoint spies on suspected pupils and thus keep an attitude of a policeman. This would develop an attitude of defiance toward school which may generalize to the civil authority, to say nothing about the evils of espionage in school. The remedy is not punishment, but a study of the child's home conditions and school achievement, his interests and play group. The teacher should cultivate the child's friendship, develop his interests and praise him for some achievement. Parents should cooperate in the cure.

##### 5) Shortcomings in School Work

Laziness is rare in our elementary and primary schools. Pupils do their best in studying and doing homework, not so much because of interest as because of fear of punishment. Poor work and laziness are usually the result of lack of interest in the subject matter which may be either too difficult or too easy. In either case it is not commensurate with pupils' mental ability and achievement. Methods of instruction are often boring and devoid of teaching aids. The lecture method is very common although it is not suitable for elementary classes. Sometimes, poor work and laziness are due to the pupil's poor health, irregularity in glandular functioning, feelings of insecurity at home, or inner emotional difficulties. Some teachers punish the lazy pupil harshly. Others

show more understanding. A teacher reported the following case: "One boy was weak in arithmetic problem solving, I knew that he was harshly treated at home. I cured him by strengthening his self-confidence and giving him affection and encouragement. I fear that he would not succeed in his future life if he is continually denied affection."

#### 6) Undesirable Personality Traits

Aggressive tendencies and actions show themselves among pupils. Contrariness, resentfulness, overcritical of others and impoliteness are concomittant with absolute control and suppression. Resentful girls tore their examination papers because of undeserved zero as a penalty for being suspected of cheating. Resentment induces the child to refuse to recite the lesson and to be impolite or even to attack the teacher and insult him. Hatred, jealousy and ill-treatment may make pupils overcritical of others.

Timid, shy, unsocial and easily discouraged pupils are not rare in Latakia schools, although teachers fail to notice them and when they do, they do not take positive measures in order to restore them to normal social behavior. Recessive traits are symptoms of difficulties in the child's life. Teachers usually consider the shy, timid child the model child. In modern discipline, the problem child is not the troublesome actively disturbing pupil, but the passive, quiet one who finds in shyness and unsocialness a refuge in which he escapes from real life. These recessive traits, if not checked are likely to lead to personality disintegration.

Teachers must bring those pupils to normal social life by giving them responsibilities and duties that put them into contact with their fellows, such as gathering money for the cooperative box, or encouraging them to recite pieces of poetry, or play with others in teams, or asking to give special help to weak pupils in subjects in which they excel. But this process should be gradual, in order not to harm their personalities.

Rare cases of unusual sensitiveness and nervous reactions are reported. The teachers met most of them with punishment.

#### 7) Transgressions Against Authority

Disobedience which is the most important transgression against authority is not common, since teachers insist upon complete compliance with school regulations and authority. The few cases were refusal to pray in school, to carry out teachers' orders or to do a required task.

Knowledge of causes is a step toward remedy. Disobedience has various causes. One cause is the lack of consistent training at home. According to Gessell, disobedience is not inherent, it is learned and is frequently a good impulse turned into a wrong direction. Children are often not intentionally disobedient, but have built a career of carelessness which results in absent mindedness, a negative attitude toward obligations. Usually these children come from unorderly homes. <sup>(1)</sup> The formality of the classroom en-

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(1) Gessell, Arnold L., "The Normal Child and Primary Education", the Atheneum Press, Boston, 1912, p. 251.

courages disobedience. The teacher who overburdens the pupils with rules and regulations invites rebellion. A natural impulse toward order is frequently inhibited by rigid prescription. Too much homework generates disobedience or at least resentfulness.

Teachers should not require overcompliance, but should realize that the continually obedient child must be looked upon with suspicion. His passivity and lack of independence might have their roots in hidden fears.

Intelligent obedience cannot be attained under absolute control. Therefore, a change in the autocratic rules is necessary. Pupils should be allowed to participate in the formulation of classroom rules; and the teacher should replace commands by kind requests which are more willingly carried out.

### 8) Accidents

Cases show that accidents happen greatly during play, such as breaking windows with balls, or unintentional rush against other pupils from which real injuries result, or hitting teachers' heads or back with balls, or throwing ink on the floor.

Carelessness and inattention as well as the narrowness of playgrounds account for accidental hurts. The child who has frequent accidents may be suffering from nervous disorders and should be examined by an expert.

By definition accidents are unintentional. This implies that cases of the kind should not be punished except with reparation

and rectification of the damage and a promise for future carefulness. Students report repairing damage coupled with penalties such as beating, or extrawork.

To prevent accidents, schools must have unbreakable materials, fixed inkwells and spacious playgrounds.

In conclusion, the teachers on the whole are of the opinion that the behavior patterns that characterize the problem child are those active disturbances that frustrate their teaching purposes, or transgress school rules and routine and violate moral standards. Cases of overt behavior are either simple such as tardiness and whispering in class, or serious problems involving multiple undesirable traits such as stealing, lying, cheating. The latter cases need the help of mental hygienists and experts, for, they represent symptoms of maladjustments in the life of the pupils.

These types are met with penalties; rare are those teachers who remedy causes rather than symptoms. Teachers' attitudes should be redirected towards more consideration of the pupils' mental health and welfare.

#### D. METHODS OF CORRECTION

No one can deny the drastic changes that took place in methods of correction of misbehavior in Syrian public elementary and primary schools during the last decade. School control, as a part of the whole educational organization, in our country was since the French Mandate an official matter. It was and is still

regulated by the Ministry of Education which sanctions the penalties to be used by teachers and principals and strives to make school conditions more conducive to character training.

The writer will deal with methods of correction under the following headings:

1. Official disciplinary system.
2. Theoretical views of teachers on punishments.
3. Penalties actually used.

### 1. Official Disciplinary System

Official Regulations on discipline were issued during the last educational reform in 1949 and published by the Ministry of Education in the "Organization of Primary and Elementary Schools." The official regulations presented below, are a translation of Chapter VI on discipline in the above mentioned Organization.

(1)

#### "Discipline"

Article 50 : Instruction and education in elementary and primary schools should be based on reform and motivation. Principals and teachers should try their best in order to reach the desired end by using methods of appeal and persuasion rather than restraint and fear.

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(1) Ministry of Education of the Syrian Republic, "Organization of Primary and Elementary Schools" (Decree 634 - November 28, 1949, Chapter VI).

وزارة المعارف - الجمهورية السورية . " النظام الداخلي للدارس الابتدائية والاولية " . المرسوم  
٢٨٠٦٤٤ تشرية ثانی ١٩٤٩ ، الفصل السادس .

Article 51 : To the end of reforming the student and keeping order in the school the following penalties may be used when necessary.

1. Admonition in private.
2. Reprimand before the students without humiliation.
3. Standing in the classroom during the lesson, or reprimanding in the principal's office in the presence of the principal and the teaching body.
4. Warning the student's guardian.
5. Suspension for a period not exceeding three days.
6. Transfer to another school.
7. Expulsion in case of gross violation of order and morality.

Article 52 : Penalties of admonition, reprimand and standing may be directly inflicted by the teacher himself. As to the penalties of warning and suspension, they could only be inflicted by a decision of the school principal.

Article 53 : The transfer of a student from one school to another and of expulsion may only be inflicted upon the recommendation of the school board and the approval of the Directorate of Education in the Muhafaza.

Article 54 : Whenever the Director of Education in the Muhafaza approves of the expulsion of a student, a circular should be issued to all primary schools in the Muhafaza forbidding his admission into these schools.



Article 55 : Students who have been expelled from a primary school may request their admission in another one, after the elapse of one year at least. Compliance with this request or its decline rests with the Directorate of Education in the Muhafaza.

Article 56 : Special instructions will be issued in order to guide teachers in methods of motivation and rewards that should be used in primary and elementary schools.

Article 57 : In reprimanding the students, it is not permitted to resort to corporal punishments, methods of publicizing and humiliation and killing of personal pride. Teachers should not send students out of the classroom except in cases of gross violation and after having immediately informed the school administration."

The critical study of these regulations will be made at some length in Chapter III of this study. But it may be justifiably said here that they reflect a progressive philosophy of education based on a sound psychology of the child and respect for his personality and mental health.

Unfortunately, the spirit and philosophy underlying the official disciplinary system are not fully grasped by teachers who do not only apply different disciplinary measures exceeding the restricted number of penalties sanctioned, but also display some abuses in their application in a manner detrimental to the child's mental health.

## 2. Theoretical Views of Teachers on Punishments.

Teachers' views about punishments approved and their manner of administration were obtained by Experiment I, Part II and III, conducted in Latakia.

### a) Teachers' views on the helpfulness of punishments

Teachers' views on the helpfulness of penalties were obtained by Experiment I, Part II, which consists in giving teachers a list of ten penalties, namely, beating, sarcasm, kind reproach, reducing school marks, sending out of the classroom, sending to the principal, additional work, detention after school, suspension and non-promotion. Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which these measures are useful, by putting a mark before each item, on a five point scale "not useful, sometimes useful, often, most often and always". (See appendix)

The experimenter wanted to know indirectly the teachers' attitudes towards these penalties, on the ground that the belief in the helpfulness of each measure may be indirectly indicative of a favoring attitude toward its use.

Table IV shows the results of Experiment I, Part II, in percentages. The interpretation of results will come in the next section on penalties actually used.

### b) Teachers' views on the administration of punishments

Teachers' views on the administration of punishments were obtained by Experiment I, Part III. Teachers in Latakia were

TABLE IV - Rating of Penalties on the Scale of Usefulness by 80 Teachers in Iatulia, given in percentages.

Type of penalty	USEFUL					Total	
	Un- cer- tain	Not use- ful	Some- times	Often	Most often		Always
1. Beating .....	3	11	54	16	10	6	86
2. Scolding .....	3	56	35	4	1	1	41
3. Kind reproach .....	1	6	15	19	40	19	93
4. Reducing school marks .....	2	18	35	21	9	15	80
5. Sending out of classroom .....	3	59	25	5	5	3	38
6. Sending to principal .....	1	24	40	24	11	10	85
7. Additional work .....	0	24	31	20	15	10	76
8. Detention after school .....	3	11	34	16	21	15	86
9. Suspension .....	3	15	30	8	25	19	82
10. Non-promotion .....	5	50	24	6	5	20	45

given ten statements about the administration of punishments and were asked to indicate whether the statements were true or false, by putting (T) before the item they think true and (F) before the one they believe to be false. Results in percentages are represented in Table V.

TABLE V - Teachers' Views on the Administration of Punishment, Given in Percentages.

Statement	True	False
1. The teacher has the right to avenge himself on the student offending him .....	21	79
2. The teacher can realize the desired end of discipline by terror .....	39	61
3. A good disciplinarian makes much use of punishment:	9	91
4. Threats is as effective as appeal in the formation of good habits .....	48	52
5. Punishment is effective no matter whether the student understands the reason for it or not ...	11	89
6. A mild punishment applied is better than a severe one threatened but not applied .....	99	1
7. In most cases, an immediate punishment is better than a delayed one .....	92	8
8. Punishment and reward should be of the nature of the misdeed .....	66	34
9. Sometimes, it is desirable not to punish the student before the group .....	82	18
10. There is no harm in punishing the class for an offense committed by one of its members .....	12	88

An examination of Table V denotes progressive views on the administration of punishments. The results are in line with teachers' conception of phases and aims of discipline previously discussed in section B of this chapter, both of which indicate a modern philosophy of discipline.

The greater majority, that is 92% of teachers in Latakia, agree that the immediacy of punishment is better than its delay, for the advantage of establishing the connection between misdeed and penalty. Privacy of punishment is recognized to be sometimes desirable by 82% of them. The statement on privacy was actually ill-constructed; it states that "sometimes it is desirable not to punish the pupil before the group", whereas "as often as possible" should replace "sometimes".

The general acceptance on the part of the teachers of the desirability of the pupil's understanding of the reason for the penalty indicates that punishment in their view aims at reform which cannot be attained without the notion of causation between misdeed and penalty. Our teachers believe that punishment should be rational, impersonal and free from the spirit of vengeance. Two thirds of them believe that punishment and reward should be of the nature of the misdeed. But the experimenter thinks this result is not reliable, as the statement must have seemed to the teachers rather vague and confusing. Teachers, on the whole, are against sacrificing the group for the individual in punishment. It is sound on their part to believe in the certainty of punishment. In

connection with threats, some proportion of teachers do have faith in their effectiveness in character education and consider them nearly equal to appeal in this respect. Those reporters recognize indirectly the importance of fear in education. But teachers are almost unanimous in that the application of a mild penalty is better than a threat of a severe one not put into effect.

The majority of teachers have the notion that punishment should not be prevalent. The good disciplinarian, in their opinion, is not one who relies greatly on the use of penalties. Nevertheless, 39% of the teachers believe in terror as conducive to the realization of the desired end of discipline. Probably, those exponents of terror did not have the right conception of the desired end of discipline.

In sum, teachers in Latakia have, on the whole, progressive ideas on the administration of punishment. But unfortunately, their theory in this respect, is not applied.

### 3. Penalties Actually Used

Reports of both pupils and teachers indicate teachers' reactions to pupils' misbehavior. These reactions are listed below according to the order of frequency of their occurrence as reported by 116 pupils and 100 teachers in Damascus.

#### 1) Verbal Punishments

Admonition and giving advice

Reprimand and scolding

1) Continued

Threats

Sarcasm

2) Corporal Punishment

3) Extra work

Writing lines

Copying lessons

4) Lowered standing

Reducing school marks

Reducing conduct marks

5) Sending to the Principal

For conference

With penalty

Referring to the disciplinary council

6) Removal from the situation

Standing in the classroom

Changing seat

Sending out of the room

Removal from one division to another

7) Deprivation

Of lunch period

Of lessons

Of play and recess

8) Suspension

Expulsion

Removal to another school

9) Detention after school

With extra work

Simple detention

Multiple detention

10) Informing parents

11) Rectification and reparation

12) Apology

13) Constructive actions

Giving responsibility

Trusting the pupil

Sharing activity

14) Ignoring

15) Teacher did not discover the misdeed

16) No punishment reported.

Before proceeding to the detailed presentation of some of the above mentioned corrective techniques, some remarks are necessary:



- (1) Strictly speaking, the penalties listed in order of frequency cannot be taken statistically. In other words, they are not a statistical representation of the actual situation. For instance, it is <sup>not</sup> right to claim that corporal punishment, which is second in the list comes in the same order in actual practice; or, it is not true to say that among 216 cases of misconduct, 47 students are actually beaten because 47 students reported physical penalty.

One may ask why the results obtained in the experiment are not valid, that is are not a true estimate of the extent to which each corrective technique is actually used, in spite of the fact that the sample of students and teachers who answered the questionnaire was enough and satisfied the required random quality. The answer is that the reports were subjective in nature and dependent on the reporters' memory. One tends usually to remember the striking facts in his past. When the students were asked to describe "a wrong action they did and what the teachers did about it", they recalled the penalties which were severe and painful to them.

- (2) There is a great discrepancy between actual practices in correcting misbehavior and the officially sanctioned ones. While some are in line with the new regulations

of 1949, others are not, such as physical punishment, scolding, sarcasm, deprivation, detention after school and extra-work. It is evident that teachers still resort to the measures allowed in the educational decree of 1938, among which are deprivation from play, detention and extra-work, either because of the lack of knowledge of the new disciplinary system, or because it is a matter of habit. Techniques prohibited by both old and new regulations are still found in schools.

(3) There is also a discrepancy between the actions reported and the penalties inflicted on the wrongdoers, which is denoted by two outstanding characteristics in the administration of punishments:

(i) The abuse displayed by some teachers in the application of painful techniques.

(ii) The use of multiple penalties for one single misdeed, e.g., a pupil who has misbehaved may be submitted at the same time to beating, detention, extra work and other types of correction.

#### 1) Verbal Punishments

By verbal punishments, we mean any kind of punishment expressed in words, ranging from mild admonition to harsh scolding.

Admonition is the first corrective device listed in the official regulations. Teachers admonish their pupils and give them

advice, calling their attention to the wrongness of their action and its evil consequences. Papers of both teachers and pupils show the popularity of admonition applied either in private, as is required by official regulations, or before the group which is by far the more frequent. Verbal admonition is usually coupled with punishment or followed by forgiveness.

Reproach is also popular in our primary schools. It is reported by 26 out of 116 students of whom 8 suffered scolding. 13 out of 100 teachers used rebuke, and out of these thirteen, 4 mentioned scolding. It seems from the papers that kindness in reproaching pupils is more prevalent than harshness. This is also deduced from teachers' opinions about mild reproof, which show that 93% of them in Latakia have faith in it, as it is clear in Table IV. <sup>(1)</sup> The majority of teachers in this town believe that kind reproach is most often or always useful.

Reprimand is applied before the students in accordance with Article 51, No. 2, in the official regulations. This is done sometimes before the class, and sometimes before the student body with the ensuing humiliation of wide publicity. Papers show that reprimand is often coupled with other penalties, as one may see in the following case reported by a girl:

"In my fourth grade, I came one day to school without having prepared my nature study lesson. When the teacher asked me to recite it, I remained silent. She beat me with a ruler, rebuked me for my laziness saying 'you are lazy'; and in

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(1) See Supra, p. 85.

addition she ordered me to write five hundred lines. This led to my repentance."

Teachers do occasionally use words hurting pupils, such as "you are a liar", or "you are impolite", or "you are an animal". These humiliating phrases are painful and kill the pupil's personal pride, the respect of which is so much stressed by the regulations.

When reprimand is loaded with painful words, it becomes scolding which is reported to be administered in public and with other penalties. An example of scolding is given by a boy who said that the teacher had cursed him. He said:

"A student spanked me while coming to school and ran away. I looked behind me, and seeing a boy nearby, mistook him for the offender, and so I spanked him back. The teacher who knew about it, frowned at me making me afraid. He called me and said; 'Stand up, may God make your legs unable to stand any more', and he scolded me. I wished the earth could open up and swallow me. I never did it again."

Humiliation accompanying scolding in public is shown in a student's report which indicates that the principal of the school made two students stand in the middle of the school yard, for having fought each other. The reporter said:

"He scolded us and beat us with a stick and then ordered us to walk to our classrooms, like prisoners. We reached our seats in the midst of the children's laughter and mockery. This was painful and reminds us not to repeat the act."

One boy stated that his teacher compelled him to confess before the student body that he was a liar.

Threats are very likely to slip into the mouth of an angry person when scolding another. This fact is confirmed by its occurrence in the reports. 6 pupils and 6 teachers gave evidences of it. But common observation in the school denotes that threatening is more common than is indicated in the reports. Perhaps the ease with which it is made stems from the fact that it does not necessarily imply the application. Our view about the frequency of threats in practice is supported by the opinions of teachers in Latakia, 48% of whom believe that they are not less effective than appeal in the formation of good habits.

Threats with different penalties are reported by children. But it seems that there is a tendency on the part of teachers to threaten with the most severe of approved penalties, such as suspension and expulsion, although they fully realize that such penalties do not lie within their power.

It seems that sarcasm when compared with other devices, is not favoured in primary schools. However, one may occasionally hear sarcastic phrases in the upper grades of the primary school, where the mental level of the pupils enables them to understand their subtle meaning. Sarcasm is considered by teachers in Latakia to be of little helpfulness and is ranked low by their majority.

## 2) Corporal Punishment

Although corporal punishment is officially prohibited, teachers seem to rely on it and use it in its different forms, as can be gathered from children's reports. 44 out of 116 students reported to have been submitted to physical penalties varying in kind and degree.

The most prevalent type of physical penalties is beating. The number of strokes reported varies from 4 to 15 at a time; the greater majority of reporters specified 10 strokes. Some pupils did not specify the number but simply said they were severely beaten. To them, the quantity does not matter so much as the quality and cruelty. 8 students out of 44 experienced very painful flogging or slapping. One boy wrote:

"We had a difficult lesson in the afternoon. I thought it would be nicer to go to the movies instead of going to school and I did. The next day, when the principal asked me about my father's excuse for my absence, I gave him a counterfeited paper I signed for my father, which he soon recognized. He slapped me on the face so harshly that I was about to faint and I was suspended from school for three days."

Some cases make it clear that beating is sometimes abused and is extremely painful. Some boys were so pained that they wept. One of them who was sensitive wept all day, because the teacher flogged him for having a fight with another fellow. Real injury is reported

as a result of physical pain. One boy, for instance, had his ear injured because he had been slapped on it. The old-fashioned bastinado is occasionally found in some schools. One of the reporters suffered it in public; he was tied to a pillar in the school yard and flogged on his lifted feet.

Physical punishment is inflicted on different parts of the body, the head, cheeks, ears which may be squeezed, arms, open or closed hands, legs, feet and on the back. The most common devices used for this purpose are sticks, rulers, and teachers' hands. Beating is actually administered either by the principal or the teacher. But strangely enough, one teacher said that in a visit to her class, a supervisor who was a man slapped a ten-year-old girl because she was quietly laughing.

It seems that corporal punishment is used in boys' schools more than in girls' schools. 40 out of 44 boys gave account of it, whereas 4 out of 38 girls did.

The greater majority, that is 86% of the teachers in Latakia believe in the usefulness of this corrective device; most of them are moderate and consider it useful when occasionally applied. This might be an indication of a favoring attitude on the part of teachers toward physical punishment, if not its actual use, even though only 3 out of 100 Damascus teachers reported to have used it. The reasons why teachers did not report cases of beating may be the following:

- (1) Either because they did not want to reveal their

transgression of official prohibition of this measure,  
(ii) or, because they sought to show educative ways of  
treatment of their cases,

(iii) or both reasons.

Some teachers, then, apply the dictum: "Spare the rod and spoil the child". They justify beating on the ground that disciplinary methods in schools should be consistent with those used at home and in the community. Therefore, it is sometimes the best effective means of reform with some pupils. Sometimes, parents urge them to beat their children. What would you say, they argue, to a father who tells you: "Here is my son, his flesh is yours, and his bones are mine"; that is you can beat him harshly. Teachers claim that parents in some quarters of Latakia accuse them of softness when they are kind with their boys.

But it is far from true to claim that the community and public opinion are not considerably moving toward revolt against corporal penalties. Parents usually realize the injustice of beating and complain about it to the educational authorities.

### 3) Extra Work

Extra work or work beyond what is required in the classroom is a popular disciplinary measure, in spite of its official interdiction. Teachers who apply it are probably following the old regulations of 1938. 19 out of 116 cases are reported by students and only one out of 100 by teachers. From teachers' experience in Latakia we conclude that additional work as a punishment



works well with their pupils, for 76% of them mentioned its helpfulness; a considerable percentage of them consider it often and always useful.

Students' accounts reveal that extra work is used in girls' more than in boys' schools. 13 out of 38 girls testified it whereas only 6 out of 76 boys did. This is probably due to the fact that men teachers resort to other penalties, such as beating and that boys revolt against wasting their time with writing lines and detention with which extra work is usually allied.

Additional work consists in writing sentences, lines, or copying from a textbook an entire chapter or a portion of it, or copying the multiplication table, verses of poetry and dictums. The number of lines required varies from fifty to one thousand. Amounts of one, two and five hundred lines were reported; but it seems that, on the average, one hundred is the most frequent. Whenever additional work consists in copying a lesson, we have instances of copying it ten times, although nothing is said about its length, kind or the textbook. But usually summaries of lessons are copied, especially in the lower classes. Some cases mentioned copying a summary fifty times. This punishment may be accompanied by other penalties and is sometimes abused as in the following boy's report:

"While my friend and I were running at recess, I bumped suddenly into him. He fell down and bled. I flushed with shame and fear and was sure of punishment. The teacher on duty took me to the principal who wanted to flog me on my feet.

But some teachers pleaded for me on condition I would not do it again. The principal beat me with his stick four times on my hands and made me stand up one whole hour and write one thousand lines."

#### 4) Lowered Standing

Lowered standing includes reduction of school marks and conduct marks, non-promotion and demotion. Only the first two types are reported by 24 out of 116 students in the following proportion: reducing school marks (15), and department marks (9). Only three teachers testified lowering marks.

School marks are reduced either in daily exercises, or in tests and examinations. In the latter, it is applied in cases of cheating or attempts at cheating. In the former, it may be due to any other reason, such as being noisy, talking during the lesson, etc... The reduction, as shown in the papers, varies from 1 to 25 marks out of 100, with the majority of pupils mentioning 15 marks. Sometimes, pupils receive a zero when cheating or misbehaving.

One incident is reported of raising the marks of one pupil and a simultaneous lowering of the marks of another who took part in the action. A pupil was prompting his friend while reciting; the teacher lowered his marks and raised those of the pupil receiving the help. It is needless to say that this is ridiculously absurd.

Concerning teachers' views about reducing school marks, the majority of them consider it helpful, as is shown in Table IV.

Lowering school marks, usually, goes hand in hand with lowering conduct marks or any other penalty, as is clear from the following girl's report:

"The teacher caught my neighbour copying from my paper in a history test. She called both of us and told me not to let her do it again. She explained to my friend that if she could cheat in that test, she would not have the chance to do so in the final examination which is closely supervised. When the principal was informed of the act, she called the disciplinary council, which decided to reduce our test marks by 25% and our conduct marks by 10%. I felt I deserved the punishment; nevertheless, my heart was torn up with sadness, and I wished to die lest someone should know of my lowered behavior mark. I wept for a long time."

In the previous case, the pupil does not deserve to be referred to the disciplinary council, or to receive this painful multiple penalty. The case shows the psychological effects of lowering department marks on the pupil's personality. In fact, conduct marks are considered by pupils of more importance than marks earned by scholastic achievement; for they are the teacher's estimate of the pupil's character, and as such they are an important factor in their reputation in school and outside of it. Parents are concerned with the department marks of their children, too. No wonder, therefore, that pupils are anxious about it, as is revealed by the case previously reported.

Some teachers are moderate in lowering conduct marks,

which may be anything between 1 and 2 marks. Evidence is obtained of reducing 25 marks out of 100. Some teachers keep a special notebook to write down the names of those who misbehave and the bad marks given for each bit of misbehavior, which are taken into account when the mid-year department mark evaluation is made. Most often, these bad marks are recorded before the pupils and ruled out later and so they seem to be mere threats.

Non-promotion for reasons of misbehavior is not usual. No such cases were mentioned by teachers or by pupils. And in teachers' ratings, it ranks among the lowest types of correction on the scale of usefulness.

#### 5) Sending to the Principal

Sending to the principal is reported by students more than by teachers. It seems that referral takes place in serious cases of damage, harm or moral transgression, such as stealing whenever the teacher could not discover the doer, cheating in examinations, sex offenses, and bullying. Nevertheless, some beginning teachers use it in cases that cannot be treated without the help of a higher authority.

When a pupil is sent to the principal, the latter may do one of several things; he may handle the case either by himself, or in cooperation with the teacher concerned, or he may in rare cases ask for a meeting of the disciplinary council. Usually, he confers with the culprit, and the meeting may end by forgiving the offender and giving him advice, or by inflicting punishment either

in private or in public. Thus, the principal does not only apply the penalties assigned to him by the regulations, such as warning the student's guardian and suspension, but also any other penalty. He decides about the punishment, or approves of those inflicted by teachers, and sometimes he acts as mediator between teachers and pupils often siding with the former.

6) Removal from the Situation

Removal from the situation takes the form of sending the pupil to the principal, sending him out of the classroom, standing or changing seats.

Sending the pupil out of the room is not frequent and is not favored by teachers for several reasons. First, it is officially forbidden except in gross violation of order (Article 57 in the Official System on Discipline). Second, the same article states that teachers should inform the principal before sending the pupil out of the classroom. Teachers refrain from sending pupils out, because they do not always want to get the principal involved in their disciplinary affairs. Third, it is a loss of time for pupils and teachers.

Making the pupil stand in the corner, before the blackboard, by his seat, or stand still during recess time is less reported than sending him out of the room; but in practice it is, to my mind, not uncommon, because it is permitted by the disciplinary system (Article 51, No. 3). Some extremists may make pupils stand more than one class period. One boy said that his teacher

forbade him to attend the lesson for some weeks, then reduced the punishment by allowing him to attend on condition he would stand all the hour for a whole week.

Changing seats is mentioned by teachers who changed the place of the wrongdoers to the front or back or to the sides of the classroom, or removed pupils from one division to another in the same classroom. One boy said that he had been removed from the division of the intelligent pupils to that of the lazy for having once neglected his homework. Removal, in the previous case is unsound; and the existence of such divisions in the classroom is not acceptable because of its psychological and educational harms.

#### 7) Deprivation

Deprivation from play, lunch or any activity is rarely found in our schools and was ruled out in the new system of school control. Teachers sometimes deprive the misbehaving pupil of lessons for one, two or more periods; but in general, teachers do not apply this device. Nothing is mentioned in the regulations about deprivation from lessons; but the fact that sending pupils out of the classroom is permitted only in serious cases is a clear recognition of the undesirability of keeping students from profiting of instruction.

Wrongdoers are sometimes deprived of participating in school activities, such as reciting lessons, answering and asking questions during class discussions and writing on the blackboard.

8) Suspension, Expulsion and Removal to Another School

These three measures sanctioned by the official regulations are very rare in actual practice. Their use, according to these regulations, is restricted to gross violation of order and morality. For this reason, the regulations make their use an administrative affair allowing their application only to principals and the Director of Education in the Muhafaza.

Suspension is very rare although reported by twelve out of 116 students. And in conformity with the prescribed regulations, it is carried out for three days, although it is reported that, in some cases, the period is extended to five days thus exceeding the period officially allowed.

Expulsion is the rarest and most severe penalty inflicted in very serious cases of sexual play and moral transgression. Removal to another school as a reform device is also uncommon in our primary schools. More will be said about these devices in Chapter III, Section A.

9) Detention

Days are gone when official statements on discipline allowed detention which meant "keeping the student after school for fifty minutes in summer time and isolating him from his fellows in the classroom for thirty minutes before lunch in winter time with extra work".<sup>(1)</sup> It used also to take the form of deprivation

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(1) Ministry of Education - Syrian Republic, "Organization of Primary Schools", (Decree 1094, Article 38-d), 1938.

which meant "compelling students to come to school on Friday mornings to do extra work in the presence of teachers who alternate in the supervision in the days when deprivations are announced."<sup>(1)</sup>

But old practices are not uncommon. A visitor to schools at noon break before lunch may observe youngsters detained for half an hour or more in their classrooms without supervision, weeping, studying and doing additional work.

In general, children are asked to remain in the school, in order to complete a task or write neglected homework; but detention may be the punishment for any type of misconduct. When abused and carried to extremes it may become deprivation of the child from the noon break and lunch.

In the present section of the chapter, the most prevalent or severe penalties were presented. The remaining types of correction, namely, informing parents, rectification and reparation, and apology, will be discussed later.

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(1) Ibid, Article 58-e.



### CHAPTER III

#### A CRITICAL STUDY OF METHODS OF CORRECTION AND OF REWARDS.

In the previous chapter, a general view is given about the situation of discipline in public primary schools of Latakia and Damascus. The present chapter, devoted to a critical study of methods of correction and of rewards used consists of two main parts:

- A. A Critical Study of Methods of Correction,
- B. Rewards.

#### A. A CRITICAL STUDY OF METHODS OF CORRECTION

The critical study of methods of correction will be made under three headings:

1. A critical study of the official disciplinary system,
2. A critical study of the penalties actually used,
3. Recommended corrective measures.

#### 1. A Critical Study of the Official Disciplinary System

The actual official regulations on discipline, issued in 1949, having their roots in the disciplinary system of 1938, represent a great improvement from the psychological and educational viewpoints.

The official regulations of 1949 eliminated some previously sanctioned penalties such as deprivation of pupils from play for one or two recess periods, detention after school, detention during half a day on Friday mornings, all of which are disregarded in modern

discipline. Other penalties were modified in the interest of the pupils; for instance, the maximum length of suspension was reduced from one week to three days. The publicizing of misdeeds has been abolished. These alterations denote a changing philosophy of discipline, more considerate of the child's mental health.

The chapter on discipline in the "Organization of Primary and Elementary Schools", Decree 634, November 28, 1949, comprises eight articles divisible in three parts. Article 50 is a general statement about education as being based on motivation and reform. Article 51 states the purpose of punishment and allows seven penalties. Articles 52 to 57 are concerned with the administration of these penalties.

a) General Evaluation of the Disciplinary System

The official disciplinary system in Syrian public primary and elementary schools mirrors a progressive philosophy discipline in the following respects:

1) In the first place, this philosophy leans toward the constructive and preventive type of discipline, as is implied in Article 50 of the decree which makes it imperative that education and instruction be based on motivation and reform, although nothing is specified about the ways of this motivation and reform.

2) In the second place, the negative phase of discipline or the remedial aspect satisfies the principles of mental hygiene. In line with the new conception of punishment, the system states clearly that the purpose of punishment is to reform the student.

This reform is to be attained by kindness, sympathetic understanding and persuasion, rather than by restraint and terror. Thus, discipline as conceived by the official system is not retributive, deterrent or absolute, but an intelligent discipline based upon the democratic principle of the individual's worth, dignity and happiness.

3) It has been stated earlier that whenever appeal and motivation, persuasion and kindness prevail in the school, misbehavior decreases and hence there is no need for a great number of punishments. Thus one of the merits of the system under consideration is the reduction of penalties to a very small number, among which some can hardly be considered as punishments proper, such as admonition of the pupil in private, removal from one school to another, both of which are educative and wholesome.

4) Finally, these penalties and their administration are, in general, harmless to the pupil's growth and mental health. The reformers of the system seem to have had these factors in mind in prohibiting all punishments which interfere with the pupil's welfare and do not lead to changes in his attitudes, such as corporal punishments, methods of publicizing, humiliation, killing of personal pride, and sending pupils out of room except in cases of gross violation of order (Article 57).

But the official disciplinary system, though progressive, is not free from weaknesses which should be remedied:

1) In the first place, the system does not give an idea

about the meaning and aims of school discipline. Does discipline mean character education, or does it aim at self-discipline, or does it consist in the development of positive conduct patterns? So long as nothing of the sort is stated and the aim and meaning are not clarified, teachers and principals will apply the articles of the system without a full understanding of its spirit.

2) In the second place, the system concerns itself mainly with the most severe penalties, namely, warning the student's guardian, suspension, expulsion, which are used scarcely and only in serious cases. It does not give positive, practical suggestions to help the teachers in the solution and treatment of everyday school problems of behavior. It leaves to teachers the freedom to handle their own problems according to their common sense, experience and the situations in which the problems occur. Of course, this freedom is desirable, and the system is not supposed to give a cure to every wrong action, but the fact that a large proportion of primary and elementary school teachers in Syria lack professional training, makes it a weakness in the official regulations not to give such suggestions.

3) There is in my opinion a certain amount of inconsistency in the system. For instance, it places great stress upon the respect of the child's personal pride, and thus abolishes humiliation and the publicizing of misdeeds. At the same time, it allows some penalties which cannot be applied without causing humiliation and shame, such as reprimanding the child before the

group or in the principal's office in the presence of the school board, or making him stand in the classroom.

4) Some terms in the articles on discipline are vague and the situations in which severe penalties are allowed are not clarified. For instance, Article 51, No. 7, states that expulsion may be used in cases of gross violation of order and morality. Teachers' evaluation of the seriousness of violations is subjective in nature. Thus, the vagueness of the term accounts for the misinterpretation of the items and misapplication of this punishment as it will be shown in the following pages.

5) Finally, Article 56 of the regulations states that special instructions will be issued to guide teachers in methods of motivation and rewards to be used in the primary school. This would be of great benefit, but so far nothing of the kind has made its appearance. But, in spite of its weaknesses, the official system represents a large step toward modern discipline.

b) Specific Evaluation of Individual Penalties

We now come to a consideration of individual penalties suggested in the disciplinary system.

1) Admonition of the pupil in private

Admonition of the pupil in private takes place in a conference between the teacher and the pupil, during which misbehavior is discussed. The teacher asks about the reasons for the wrong action and the pupil gives the explanation. The teacher leads him to see the seriousness and import of the misdeed to both

the pupil and the group. This disciplinary measure is most effective and may be considered as a form of guidance.

2) Reprimand before the students without humiliation

Reprimanding the student before the class, even though aiming at the reform of the individual student and the group, is not devoid of weaknesses. It cannot be applied without leaving bad effects on the personality of the student, for, it is extremely difficult to apply it without the humiliation inherent in publicizing. This penalty smacks of the deterrent theory where the interest of the individual is sacrificed for the alleged benefit of the group. Reproof before the class might be acceptable only in rare cases and provided the teacher does not address the culprit himself, but contents himself with making general comments about the misdeed and its implications. (1)

3) (1) Standing in the classroom during the lesson

This penalty, often thought by teachers to be mild and harmless, is actually detrimental to the child as well as to the group. It does not work with the extravert child whose misbehavior may be caused by denial of attention; because it gives him the satisfaction of being the center of attention and as such may be a further incentive to the repetition of the misdeed. The introvert, sensitive child is harmed by standing in the class-

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(1) Naddur Ellias, "Penalties and Rewards", The Arab Teacher Review, Damascus, 1952, p. 346.

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room, for it produces in him feelings of shame and guilt.

Moreover, this penalty allows troubles in the course of the lesson. The standing child may try to draw the attention of the class by making faces, gestures and causing the class to laugh. In the opinion of the writer, this penalty should be dispensed with.

(ii) Reprimand in the principal's office in the presence of the principal and the teaching body.

This second type of removal should also be ruled out. True that it may be effective and may correct the child, but it does not reach his deeper attitudes. On the other hand, it is harmful to his personality because it is based on fear and feelings of shame.

Sending to the principal, without reproof, is permitted in rare cases, whenever he can help in the remedy of the situations causing the trouble.

#### 4) Warning the student's guardian

Warning the student's guardian is sound when it is not considered as a penalty to be followed by another at home. This disciplinary measure should be positive; that is, it should be followed by a conference between the parents, the teacher and principal, in which the student's misbehavior and its causes are discussed. The soundness of this device stems from the fact that the student's family or community conditions are, to a great extent, responsible for his actions and thus parents should cooperate in

his education. In point of fact, cooperation between home and school should take place not only in cases of serious misconduct, but also periodically during the school life of the student.

#### 5) Suspension

The dangers of suspension for misbehavior are manifold. In the first place, it is usually undemocratic, for, it violates the principle of equality of educational opportunity by depriving the pupil of instruction. Teaching is a continuous process any break of which, whether great or small, retards the academic progress of the pupil. Moreover, the pain accompanying suspension does away with the affection of the suspended pupil for the teacher and school, and thus destroys the friendly atmosphere necessary to education. But more important, is the harm resulting from publicizing suspension, which makes for difficulties in the emotional and social adjustment of the pupil who suffers the feelings of guilt and the loss of his peers' esteem as well as that of teachers and family.

Therefore, suspension may be applied under very rare circumstances, where the overexcited misbehaving pupil needs some days of relaxation. It is specially helpful with hypomanic children, and should be administered after an arrangement between the parents and the principal, without revealing it to the other students. During the period of suspension, more positive measures must be taken, e.g., the child may be referred to a physician for treatment.

In our schools, suspension is applied as a punishment not



as a positive measure consisting in remedying misconduct. The Syrian system of discipline in primary schools, realizing the severity of suspension and in order to ensure its right application, makes it an administrative affair confining its application to the principal. But as the system does not give an idea about the situations in which it may be used, misapplication sometimes takes place. Children's papers show that it is sometimes unrelated and disproportionate to the misdeed, as when a child is suspended for breaking a window during play.

6) Transfer to another school

Transfer to another school is a valuable measure of reform in very serious behavior problems, those that seem untractable when the school environment is not quite conducive to the reeducation of the pupil. It is specially helpful when the causes of misconduct lie within the school boundaries. The pupil will probably be better restored to normality when removed from the milieu in which his difficulties arose, to another milieu where the new group and classmates do not have any knowledge about his bad reputation.

One objection to the pupil's removal to another school is that it may harm him academically, because of change of teachers and methods of teaching. For this and other reasons, the system restricts its application and makes it possible only when a decision is taken by the school board and approved of by the Director of Education in the Muhafaza (Article 53).

7) Expulsion

Expulsion is the most severe penalty in the system, and has weaknesses. In the first place it is against the principle of equality in educational opportunity, because it deprives the student from instruction for one year (Article 55). Moreover it is unjust because it charges the pupil with complete responsibility for his behavior, whereas modern discipline conceives of the child's behavior as the outcome of a multitude of factors, hereditary and environmental, most of which are beyond his control. On the other hand, expulsion not only does not correct the pupil, but also leaves him to the effects of bad conditions favoring delinquency and perhaps criminality. It is probable that the expelled pupil develops anti-social behavior by affiliating in bad gangs and indulging in their activities. Teachers report that pupils who have been expelled became delinquent.

The official regulations recognizing the seriousness of expulsion, limit its period to one year and its application to serious violations of order and morality. Decision about expulsion of the pupil lies in the hands of the school board provided the decision is approved by the Director of Education (Article 55). Readmission of the pupil may be decided upon by the Director of Education in the Muhafaza (Article 55).

The papers show that expulsion is sometimes misapplied and used in cases of obscene notes and insults to teachers which could have been remedied without this painful punishment.

The writer is of opinion that removal to another school may very well replace expulsion in most cases of moral transgressions. Expulsion is sometimes necessary to relieve the class from psychotic children, epileptics with frequent attacks, the feeble-minded and those overactive children suffering from the aftereffects of encephalitis. (1)

In conclusion, among the penalties allowed by the official disciplinary system, we approve of private admonition, warning the student's guardian, removal to another school, and of some of the others in very rare cases. Now let us pass to a critical study of the punishments actually used.

## 2. A Critical Study of the Penalties Actually Used

In Chapter II, Section D., a presentation of disciplinary measures actually used in Syrian public primary schools has been made. Now, a critical evaluation of each will be successively made.

### 1) Verbal Punishments

Among verbal punishments, scolding, nagging, threats, and sarcasm are condemned by modern education.

Our system rightly dropped scolding out (Article 50). It brings to the foreground the personal element, reduces pupil-teachers relationship to quarreling, and it hurts the pupils by

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(1) Cutts Norma E., and Moseley Nicholas, op. cit., p. 73.

the accompanying angry words. Furthermore, it is not courteous and may contain impolite language which the pupils may learn and apply to others. A child, for instance, may easily call another "an ass" if the teacher uses this language.

Scolding has different effects on children according to their temperament. A sensitive child may not stand it. A woman teacher reported that she scolded a girl for looking at a photograph during the lesson; the girl wept abundantly, and fainted. A tough-minded child may not be corrected by scolding. The teacher may well remember that scolding, if frequent, loses its effectiveness, especially with tough-minded children.

Nagging is condemned because it is a constant reminder to the nagged pupil of his misdeed, and, as such, it is a prolonged punishment not at all in proportion to the misdeed.

Threats trouble the friendly relations between teachers and pupils. Therefore teachers should not use threats, especially those involving severe penalties as is obtained in the papers, and whenever a threat is made of an ordinary penalty, carrying it out is necessary. Threats may not be effective as in the case of the following girl:

"While running and playing at recess time, I dashed against a little girl who consequently had her head injured. I was sent to the principal's office trembling with fear. The principal beat me, ordered me to write two-hundred lines and threatened to suspend me for three days if I played anymore. But next period, forgetting the principal's threat, I played

with the ball and accidentally broke a window. I received similar punishments".

Sarcasm is never justifiable, and as Luella Cole said, it is impolite on the part of the teacher, a lack of courtesy and good manners; it is bad taste to adults, especially children. (1) Moreover, it is unfair and cruel because it causes the class to laugh at the offender.

## 2) Corporal Punishments

The abolition of physical punishments is a praiseworthy event in our progressive educational reform, which does away with coercion.

In mild forms, physical punishment does little harm though no good, as Bertrand Russell said. It is true that it often produces no resentment against the person who inflicts it, and where it is customary children adapt themselves to it as a course of nature. (2) The writer once asked a young girl of her acquaintance if she liked her teacher who beats her sometimes, and was surprized to know that the girl did like and respect the teacher. But the danger here is that it may accustom children to the idea that it might be right and proper to inflict physical pain in order to maintain authority, a dangerous lesson to teach to

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(1) Cole Luella, "Teaching in the Elementary School", Rinehart and Company, New York, 1946, p. 221.

(2) Russell, Bertrand Arthur William, "Education and the Good Life", Boni and Liveright Inc., New York, 1926, p. 176.

those who will be in power. <sup>(1)</sup> Moreover, pupils accustomed to beating will always keep this awe and respect to physical force. This is specially significant in a young country like Syria which has recently been freed from long periods of coercion and submission. We need courageous freedom-loving patriots who are able to fight suppression, whether external or internal.

In severe forms, physical punishment generates cruelty and brutality. It causes resentment and aggressiveness on the part of pupils. The teacher who hits may be thought of as a bully. A boy reported that he beat the teacher because he could not bear to be beaten. Another said that he took a classmate as a scape goat and slapped him, because the former was slapped by the teacher. Usually not aggressiveness but fear and hatred to the teacher results. Thus beating destroys that relation of joy and open confidence which should exist between teacher and pupils in order to achieve educational ends. The sense of guilt and despair caused by harshness and public infliction of beating injures the pupil's personality. One boy wept all the day for being flogged; <sup>(2)</sup> not <sup>(3)</sup> to say anything about physical injury.

Besides, corporal pain, administered in public is detrimental to the mental health of other pupils, and thus it is against the interests of both the individual and the group. Sensitive

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(1) Ibid., p. 176

(2) See Supra., p. 96.

(3) See Supra., p. 97.

children may not bear its sight, specially shaking others.

### 3) Extra Work

Extra work as a punishment for misbehavior is unjustifiable because of its inherent relation to school work and its indirect interference with the academic instruction of the pupil. Motivation is an important corner stone in learning and consists in making school work pleasant and interesting. Extra work as a punishment associates subject matter with unpleasurable experience, for, it produces the pupil's dislike for the lessons he is asked to copy, whether verses of poetry, the multiplication table, or any other material.

This penalty does not only reverse the law of learning, but also it may hinder the future growth of the child. Dislike of adults for intellectual pursuits may be due to the association of school work with punishment. Again, asking a pupil to write several pages or five-hundred or a thousand lines at a time induces him to do it hurriedly and thus he develops habits of carelessness in writing. <sup>(1)</sup> Moreover, extra work wastes the pupil's time which should be occupied with constructive activities, either studying or play and hobbies. It is illogical in our schools where curricula are still overloaded and pupils' academic duties need much effort. Any additional work may lead to the neglect of these duties and hence to school retardation, not to mention fatigue of

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(1) Gutts Norma E., and Mosely Nicholas, op. cit., p. 69.

the pupils hands or bodies, especially when the number of lines to  
(1)  
be written is exaggerated.

Informal conversations with pupils reveal that extra work is sometimes harmful to moral development; for it leads them to deceit. Pupils told that when they were asked to copy several times a chapter from a textbook, they wrote only its beginning and end without the teacher noticing the deceit.

Some teachers ask the pupil who neglects to study his lesson, to write it several times in order to learn it. This is unsound; for either he often writes it mechanically, or the idea of being compelled to do it interferes with comprehension essential to learning. It would be better to ask the pupil to restudy it at home, and make sure he does.

#### 4) Lowered Standing

Lowering school marks for misbehavior is inadvisable because it makes learning disagreeable. In other words, to lower a pupil's marks in reading if he is noisy during the reading period is educationally indefensible, for, it associates an unpleasant emotional tone to what is supposed to be an enjoyable performance. Feeling the unfairness of the penalty, the pupil will develop a dislike for reading.

Subject marks are earned by the pupil through intellectual achievement and should represent that and nothing else. Most

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(1) See Supra., p. 99.



educators insist that academic achievement and conduct are two separate matters and should be kept separate. (1)

Reducing subject marks for misconduct does not reach inner attitudes nor transform the inward man; it produces outward superficial conformity not inward loyalty that results in conformity.

From children's papers, we have numerous instances where reduction of marks is neither related to the misdeed nor a logical consequence of it, e.g., a boy's marks were reduced for having accidentally broken a window. The natural punishment in this case is mere reparation. Some cases denote that marks are reduced for truancy. In these cases, it aggravates the causes of misbehavior; for it increases the pupil's dislike of the school, which is probably the cause of his truancy.

Reducing marks in case of cheating and attempts at cheating is unjust; for, the amount of cheating is not easy to estimate; and hence the reduced mark would not represent a true evaluation of the pupil's achievement. In such cases, the cheater may be asked to repeat the examination on the understanding that cheating should not be ignored. Lowering examination marks, popular in our schools, does not deter pupils from cheating even in public examinations and under rigid supervision, because cheating is largely due to the difficulty in subject matter and type of examinations. (2)

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(1) Cole, Luella, op. cit., p. 223.

(2) See Supra., p. 57.

Lowering conduct marks should be dispensed with, because it is specially significant to the pupils who are eager to have a good reputation. Conduct itself should not have numerical evaluation, as it is the actual practice in Syrian schools, and instead of marks, a citizenship record may be used, on which the pupil is rated in each personality and behavior trait and which helps in evaluating his progress along these traits. In Syria, we must do away with competition and comparison of one pupil to others, which is implied in the type of determining the pupil's rank in the class; or his promotion by averaging his academic and conduct marks at the end of the year. Article 41 of the "Organization of Primary and Elementary Schools" states: "Conduct and activity marks are added to the final total marks when the general average is computed at the end of the year."

#### 5) Deprivation

Some types of deprivation found in our schools should be avoided, namely, deprivation of pupils from attending classes and keeping them in at recess.

Depriving a pupil from attending classes is rightly dropped in our official system, but still applied and sometimes not only ineffective but also harmful. A pupil playing truant cannot be reformed by being deprived of attending classes; if a pupil has a liking for a subject, preventing him from attending to it deprives the school of an opportunity. This penalty is very artificial in the case where a boy was deprived of a class period

for having fought a classmate during play.

Deprivation from recesses is a curse against education, especially in cases when misbehavior arises from fatigue and boredom. Recess periods relax the child and make him less nervous, less tense, and more willing to sit quietly. They are of great help to the overactive child who will be worse than ever in misbehaving when denied the satisfaction of his needs for physical activity and play.

The dangers of keeping pupils in at recess stand clearly in our traditional schools where instruction, on the whole, lacks the element of motivation and is not based upon the principles of activity, freedom, play and self expression as in the newest methods of education. Moreover, the physical conditions of our classrooms are not encouraging; and pupils wait impatiently for the bell to get out to the fresh air and sunshine. Therefore, it is unhealthy to deny them these pleasures.

In the following case reported by a boy, deprivation is abused and unfair:

"I tripped a schoolmate while running in the playground. He fell down and was injured. When the teacher asked me why I did so, I bent my head, wishing the earth to swallow me and I apologized. He decided to deprive me of all recesses and detain me for one hour at noon every day and he applied the penalty for one week, after which he forgave me."

One has no objection to segregating a child for a short while if he

habitually and intentionally causes injury to his schoolmates, but what one objects to is the abuse of segregation and deprivation from play as in the case cited above.

6) Detention

Detention of pupils after school is unacceptable. Keeping them for about thirty minutes before noon to do extra work is harmful to their health and frustrates their need for physical and mental relaxation after four periods of work. It also makes pupils restless in the afternoon periods. Teachers should not detain lazy pupils before lunch in order to study neglected lessons. One can imagine the difficulty of studying in an excited emotional state and the loss of mental energy involved in the process. Under such circumstances, the wise teacher asks the pupils to restudy the lesson at home and be sure they do.

The teacher who kept a girl in after school in order to restudy her lesson because she stammered in reciting her lesson summary did not realize that stammering, probably due to the girl's fear of the teacher, or to emotional difficulties, is likely to increase with punishment.

When detention is prolonged to include all the lunch break, it becomes a grave educational crime; it harms the pupil's health and deprives him of lunch. A girl told of a bad headache because detained and deprived of lunch. Detention in the afternoon prevents children from enjoying their leisure time, in addition to its harm to their health after six periods of work. This

penalty has also practical disadvantages. Some parents need their children at home, or get worried about them. This disadvantage stands clearly in girls' schools. Parents are usually scrupulous about their girls and do not like them to be late in coming home. Keeping pupils after school involves two complications: first, of the necessity of notifying parents beforehand, second, of the necessity of supervising the detained pupils. To require additional work from teachers for this purpose would be unjust. Detention is sometimes not effective, and some detained pupils manage to escape from school. This measure is justifiable only on one condition: when the child is asked to stay for ten or fifteen minutes for a conference with the teacher during which misbehavior is discussed.

### 3. Recommended Corrective Measures

Having ruled out a large proportion of the penalties actually used in Syrian public primary schools, what measures can the teacher use in order to treat cases of misbehavior, or, how can he remedy the misconduct/<sup>in</sup>every day school life, especially with ordinary cases? The following measures are applied in progressive schools, for they have proved to be effective and to satisfy the principles of mental hygiene. The reader will notice that they are positive and some of them belong to the series of natural punishments. Teachers should be wise in deciding about their infliction in the right situations and with the right pupils.

Before going on to a detailed discussion of these practical

measures, some remarks are necessary concerning their application.

The most important is that in the correction of misbehavior as a phase of moral education, individual differences between pupils should be taken into account. In other words, punishment should be individualistic. This implies two things:

(i) No given particular penalty for a particular break of a rule of conduct, unless the penalty is related in nature to the misdeed. In this connection, one may claim that correction should be adjusted to the offense, in order to help the culprit to gain an idea of the relative value society places upon various aspects of behavior. The dangers of adjusting the penalty to the offense/<sup>lie</sup> in that those whose serious misbehavior is the outcome of inner difficulties and emotional maladjustments, are badly in need of positive help. If they receive the most painful penalties they will be crushed by them. The teacher should realize that the application of punishment depends upon the circumstances in which the misbehavior took place, and that every situation of overt acts is unique, and has its special characteristics, causes and conditions.

(ii) The second implication is that correction should be adjusted to the offender. In this connection two general factors should be considered. First, what form of correction will prove most effective to the individual concerned? Every case should be fully studied before a penalty is applied, the temperament of the offender, his mood, age, physical and mental conditions. A look to

a sensitive child is enough to make him aware of his wrong action, whereas a toughminded child may need several conferences in order to win his cooperation in his reform. Second, the intention of the offender should be considered; it is a contributing element to the justice of the penalty. Sometimes misbehavior results from ignorance and mistakes may occur with the best intentions; in these cases, teachers should be tolerant. Concerning intentions, one may object that they are difficult to determine because all culprits may declare their good intentions. True that the determination of intentions is subjective, but the wise teacher sees the occurrence in the light of the general tenor of the child.

The teacher should be sure the penalty is deserved; students are quick in detecting injustice in correction and they identify undeserved punishment with vindictiveness. Reports of pupils show clearly that they felt the unfairness of unmerited penalties, because they were innocent and teachers could not detect actual wrongdoers. Others reported that there was no proportion between their actions and the penalties inflicted. Unmerited correction produces grudge in pupils that might embitter them toward the school and the teacher.

Finally, punishment should be impersonal, objective or rational in order to be fair to the pupil, and effective, and enable him to comprehend the educational values intended in the correction.

In the light of the previously mentioned principles, the teacher may apply the following measures:

1) Ignoring

Ignoring or conniving at the behavior in question is recommended by theorists, but not very much applied in schools. If used in its proper place, it saves time in the classroom for work, for if the teacher would pay attention to every act or gesture of every pupil, instruction would be impossible. In this connection, we may quote Raleigh Schorling addressing the teacher: "Do not make an issue of something trivial. Once, one was asked what makes a great administrator; he replied, 'you have to be blind in one eye and deaf in one ear.'<sup>(1)</sup> However, one should not go to extremes. The wise teacher, for instance, will ignore unintentional little mistakes of the oversensitive child, small errors caused by a pupil's ill-health, forms of normal restlessness, getting up in seats on the part of the pupils sitting at the back or on the sides of the classroom, changing sitting position and occasional inattention for a few seconds. Ignoring is an effective means of control for the show-off pupil. An indifferent attitude on the part of the teacher denies him the satisfaction he searched for in unwholesome ways. Punishment in this case makes him feel the hero. Of course, the teacher needs to control himself and at the same time he should not allow the pupil to go far. Positively, he should give him some activity that enables him to earn praise and recognition.

2) Simple Control

Simple control is sometimes sufficient to bring about

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(1) Schorling, Raleigh, "Student Teaching", McGraw Hill Company Inc., New York, 1940, p. 62.



wholesome attitudes and bring the pupil back to schoolroom quietness. A look to the inattentive or sleepy or gossiping pupil, or a fixation of sight on him for a few seconds, a steady, kind look is often effective. Some pupils may need a more firm, reproaching look. But teachers should beware of angry or disgusted looks which make the heart of some pupils beat rapidly. Pupils report that they fear such looks and feel their heart sinking. Calling the student by name will call his attention to the work being done. Teachers should also avoid angry tone of voice. A quiet and pleasant tone is more effective. A smile is very significant; it shows the pupil that you have confidence in him though you know his action. On occasions, a simple request or suggestion may be of great help. Requests should be positive rather than negative. One should not shout at the pupil "don't, stop, or come down!"; One might tell him kindly to go on reading, invite him to participate in class discussion, erase the blackboard, or draw the curtain... etc. Errands may be useful when they do not cause him to miss a portion of the lesson.

### 3) A Conference

A conference with the pupil in which the error is discussed is the next step after simple control if the latter does not work. <sup>(1)</sup> It is the same penalty indicated in the official system by admonition of the pupil in private, and this may take place

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(1) Cutts, Norma E. and Moseley Nicholas, op. cit., p. 41.

immediately either during the class period when the rest of the class is occupied with an activity such as writing exercises, or just after the class period, or after school. An immediate conference has the advantage of having all details fresh in the minds of both pupil and teacher and of satisfying the criterion of swiftness in punishment, the value of which lies in identifying cause and effect in memory. The merit of an after-school conference is that it allows emotions to cool. Now how can the teacher determine whether the conference should be immediately held or delayed. In this matter the situation in which the misbehavior occurred, as well as the pupil's temperament, constitute the determining factors. Usually, a delayed penalty consists of two parts; anticipation and realization. For a sensitive pupil, to wait a whole day for an after school conference is painful, because of the prolonged worry about the anticipated punishment. Some pupils may prepare plans to defeat the teacher, an immediate conference is better for them. In the conference, the teacher and the pupil talk directly about the incident; the pupil explains his action and the teacher explains why he should not have done it. The teacher's explanation should be clear and educative; he must appeal to the pupil's sensitiveness to social approval and disapproval and the interest of the group, and beware of giving uneducative explanations, as one of them did when she told a girl who cheated in an examination that she should not do it again because she would not have the chance of cheating in the official primary examination under closer supervision,

or because her examination would be disregarded. Such explanations teach the girl more refined ways of cheating in the one case and induce her to stop cheating for fear of failure in the other case. The wise teacher does not let anger and scolding have their way in the conference. Anger prevents clear thinking on the part of the teacher and detracts him from searching for a solution of the pupil's difficulties. On the other hand, it stimulates in the pupil an emotional excitement which prevents him from grasping the explanation necessary to his reform.

Most of the time, the conference should be private in order to preserve the pupil's self-respect necessary to self-control and proper conduct. But on occasions, where the public opinion in the classroom shows much disapproval and the group is disturbed, it may be useful to confer with the whole class, and ask the other students to help improve the attitude of the disturbing pupil, especially when they make the standards of conduct and are anxious to meet them.

#### 4) Removal from the Situation

Among various forms of removal, changing seats, and divisions and sometimes sending to the principal's office, are acceptable. The advantages of removal as an immediate measure outweigh its disadvantages, if carefully planned and executed. In its simplest form, changing the pupil's seat aims at removing causes

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of misbehavior arising from the poor sitting position or poor distribution of pupils in their seats. Usually in our schools, pupils are assigned to their seats at the beginning of the year according to their height. Sometimes changes are needed when two neighbors are either overactive, talkative or on bad terms with each other, or when they are very intimate friends and try to have fun by playing or whispering, writing notes, laughing, or any other undesirable action. The teacher should change the seat of the more disturbing neighbor to a better environment, by seating him near a definitely quiet, obedient, attentive pupil, so that by contagion he may be restored to desirable conduct. It is desirable to seat problem children next to the teacher or in the front rows so that the vigilant eye of the teacher prevents temptation. One teacher reported that a certain pupil liked to move constantly and attack others. After vainly warning him several times, the teacher assigned him a front seat in order to keep an eye on him. The pupil improved and became industrious. The pupil removed from his seat should recognize that the change is in order to help him improve his behavior.

Sending the pupil out of the classroom should not be resorted to except in serious cases of disturbance, such as when fresh air helps the excited pupil to regain his equilibrium. At the same time, the class and the teacher will be relieved of disturbance and the latter is better able to think about the next step and prepare for a conference with the child. It may be used in

such overt acts as shouting at a classmate and quarreling with others or outbursts of laughter and weeping. The official, disciplinary system requires that the teacher should immediately inform the principal lest sending out creates difficulties outside the class or with the pupil's parents. Unfortunately, whenever some principals are informed they make matters worst by inflicting unwise punishments.

Two other types of removal are also helpful under certain circumstances. They are removal of the pupil to another class division and to another school. The latter measure has already been dealt with in Part A, No. 1.

#### 5) Sending to the Principal

This measure has its advantages and disadvantages according to the situation in which it is used. When applied in ordinary cases of classroom misconduct, it may mean an admission to the entire class that the teacher is weak and unable to handle his own problems. The teacher must always remember that he should be responsible for his own discipline. Moreover, principals usually do not have time to solve the individual pupil's problems except by punishing; often they get annoyed to see their time taken. Therefore, only serious cases may be referred to the principal and only when the teacher feels he is right, so as not to lose the respect of both principal and pupils. In general, the determining factor in deciding when to refer a pupil to the principal should be the capability of the latter to help the child and teacher. Of

course, long experience and broad perspective as well as close contact with and knowledge about the community enable the principal to see the difficulty in a different light than a beginning teacher can. And it is very natural to get his help in problems which need consultation with parents, where the source of the child's difficulty lies at home or is related to basic school regulations. Cases of stealing, truancy and other serious moral transgressions may be referred to the administration of the school. Cases that could be handled by the teacher himself should by no means be referred to the administration, as in the following case of a boy:

"One day, I quarrelled with a friend of mine at recess time. In the following class period, he said some unbearable words to me which made me angry; I got up from my desk and slapped him on his neck. At the end of the period the teacher sent us both to the principal who beat us both with a big stick. This made me furious and I made up my mind to take revenge on my friend. After school we quarrelled again."

In the previous case, the principal made matters worse. Teachers should acquaint themselves with the principal's point of view on discipline before referring cases to him. This is particularly true in Syria where some primary school principals do not hold modern views on the subject. It is needless to say that the principal should be regarded not as a policeman but as a father who understands the pupils problems and fully sympathizes with them. Some writers on the subject rightly believe the school morale is

very much lifted by sending pupils to the office for praise, especially if they have been previously sent for misconduct. (1)

6) Deprivation

Deprivation from classroom pleasures, a privilege, a responsibility or a possession is often the logical natural result of the overt act.

Deprivation from classroom pleasures or isolation and exclusion, permits the child to take part in academic class work but deny him the participation in its pleasures, such as entering into class discussion. This method is useful when the class is ruled by reciprocity and where the members decide about their affairs, and judge the pupil's behavior according to the standards they set up. The isolated child feels that the social bond between himself and the group is temporarily broken and that he will not be back in family circle until he proves willing to live harmoniously with others. The effectiveness of exclusion depends upon the nature of the misbehavior, the work being done and the characteristics of the child. It is effective in direct proportion to the sociality of the moment and the social tendencies of the child. The withdrawn and the introvert child should not be isolated, for isolation takes him away from reality. Whatever the situation may be, deprivation from classroom pleasures or

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(1) Ibid, p. 52.

(2) Schneideman, Rose, "Democratic Discipline in Practice", New York, Harper and Brothers, 1945, p. 399.

activity should be short because it creates an unpleasant atmosphere in the room. Deprivation should not be abused as in the following examples; a girl reported having been deprived of reciting her lessons for three days because of cheating in dictation; and a boy reported that he was deprived of writing on the blackboard for one week because he copied from others his arithmetic homework.

Loss of privilege may be applied when the pupil fails to fulfil his obligations. A monitor who is not up to his position must be replaced by a more competent one, until he proves ready to take up responsibility. The advantage of loss of privilege is that normal pupil-teacher relationship can readily be restored as soon as the pupil proves to be worthy again of taking responsibility. The effectiveness of this disciplinary measure stems from its nature as a reciprocal punishment implying the social disapproval of the group so influential in the pupil's life. And as Jean Piaget said, it means the termination of the social contact<sup>n</sup> in the group owing (1) to the conditions of the contract not having been observed. Deprivation of privilege, however, should not be abused. In connection with privileges, it may be right to notice that they are very rare in our schools. Teachers should run their classes and the school on a democratic basis where authority is delegated to pupils who should be afforded more opportunity for taking responsibilities and participating in school activities.

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(1) Piaget, Jean, "The Moral Judgment of the Child", translated by Marjorie Gabain, The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1948, p. 206.



The loss of a possession like the loss of a privilege may be regarded as consequence of the overt act, and as such it is effective. A teacher told that he took from a pupil a story book which he was reading during a class period. If a girl looks at some snapshot during the lesson, it should be taken from her. A girl who chews gum in class should be asked to throw it into the waste paper basket. Loss of a possession should not be accompanied by other penalties, as is reported in children's papers which show that it is coupled with scolding, beating and additional work.

#### 7) Placing on Honor or Probation

When the culprit promises to correct his ways if given the chance, he may be forgiven and placed on honor or probation. The teacher, then, must show confidence in the pupil, and at the same time make him feel that a watchful eye will be upon him during the probationary period. Myers shows the effect of trust and confidence in saying that the law of confiding expectation states "when we show the student that he will be a good or bad child, he will not disappoint us."<sup>(1)</sup> This also implies encouraging the pupil and strengthening his self-confidence and respect. Meanwhile the teacher should search for causes and help the pupil to remove them.

#### 8) Restitution

Restitutive punishment consists in paying for or replacing a broken or stolen object, in restoring or repairing damage.

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(1) Myers, Robert C., "Toward Mental Health in Schools", The University of Toronto Press, Canada, 1939, p. 95.

in cleaning up after an accident, or in doing over correctly something that has been done wrongly. It is used in the categories of accidents, practical jokes and property damage. If a child breaks a window, he should pay for it; if he pours ink unintentionally on a neighbor's notebook he should replace it, if he can afford the price. Restitution is a natural consequence of the occurrence and satisfies the criterion of immediacy. On the other hand, it is a good training for future adult life where every person is required to rectify wrong actions. If the school is to bring children up to a refined social life, rectification should not be coupled with another penalty. One is not scolded or beaten if he breaks a window in a hotel, he may be simply asked to pay for it. The papers show that restitution is usually inflicted with other penalties as in the following boy's case:

"One day, I tore up a sheet of paper to pieces and threw it on the playground. The teacher on duty looked at me disgustedly, gave me a bastinado before all the students, and told me not to do it again. After ten minutes he apologized to me."

It goes without saying that the punishment inflicted by the teacher is very far removed from the offense. A more suitable punishment, approaching natural punishment is asking the pupil to clean up the spot.

#### 9) Apology

One function of training the individual toward social

cooperation is to develop in him an attitude of willingness to behave properly toward others; therefore, he must regret and apologize for having interfered with their rights. An apology carries with it an assumption of inward recognition of wrong done and an eager desire to atone for the injury done another. The pupil should feel regret before apologizing. Teachers and principals must refrain from forcing apologies, especially in public. When they do, they will obtain lip-service apologies not a transformed spirit, which is acquired by kindness and proper explanation of the imports of the misconduct, not as a result of harsh penalties.

Our students should be trained to apologize to their peers in everyday life and learn the ways of good social life. Most of reported apologies were made to teachers not to the offended students, and after a punishment which lessens their value.

## B. REWARDS

Rewards as opposed to punishments are sources of pleasure and positive incentives in human conduct.

Three general types of rewards may be distinguished:

- 1) The approval of a respected individual. Children are usually hero-worshippers of some respected adult in their environment. Approval may be given by the teacher by several means: praise, a smile, a look to show that the act is commended, a bit of humour, or material prizes.

- 2) The approval of the group to which children belong, usually the class. The good opinion of the group is one of the greatest rewards the normal individual can hope to receive. This is usually expressed in children's liking to associate with the well-behaved child, to play and work with him.
- 3) The highest type is personal approval or self-satisfaction or pleasure which comes from following the ideal.

In the Syrian public primary schools, rewards and prizes of different kinds are available. Owing to the fact that the new official disciplinary system has not given the promised instructions on rewards to be used in primary schools, the types of prizes in common use are those allowed in the educational laws of 1938. According to Articles 34 to 36 of this law, prizes consist of a graded system of four coloured cards varying in the degree of attractiveness and value. They are: Marha مرحى, Istihsan استحسان, Intiaz امتياز, and Takdir تقدير, followed by two grades of prizes Aljai'zah الجايزة, and Al-kitab الكتاب, and by writing the pupil's name on the honor's list. The takdir is offered to the pupil who is first in his class; the intiaz to the second and the jaiza to the first in the final examination. Writing the pupil's name in the honor's list is reserved for those whose total average is eighty in school examinations. To my mind, such rewards are not educative because they encourage individual competition and seem

to overemphasize academic achievement.

Material rewards, such as clothes and notebooks have their place in some schools but are rare. Praise is mainly used by teachers who lean toward kindness and encouragement, especially graduates of primary teachers colleges. Delegating responsibilities to well-behaving pupils is also practised on a small scale.

Our belief is that self-satisfaction or self-approval is the most educative type of reward. But the actual situation in homes and schools, and the nature of childhood have their dictates. When school conditions are ideal and when the nature of instruction is extremely appealing to the children's interests, it may be the dominant type of reward. Situations in Syrian primary schools, as well as the liking of children for recognition of others, make for the necessity of using some kinds of approval shown by the teacher, in addition to group approval. The growth of self-approval as a dominant mode of motivation will be helped by the following rewards:

1) Praise

Praise is one of the positive incentives commended by educators and psychological experts. From the Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, we have several statements about its necessity and effect. Clinicians rightly claim that it satisfies one of our greatest needs and it is necessary for the child's development. It spurs on the child to further accomplishment and effort, for it satisfies his need for recognition and raises his opinion of himself.

Therefore, it should be given generously, and teachers do not have to be afraid that children become spoiled or conceited, when praise is deserved. The wise teacher always looks for something to praise. In praising, he observes individual differences in pupils' temperament. To a sensitive pupil, a word of praise may cause embarrassment, so that he may prefer to do the wrong thing than to bear public commendation. To another pupil praise is not a spur to greater effort; on the contrary, it may lead him to rest on his laurels. Sometimes, it is advisable to have the principal praise a pupil who has been sent to him for troublesome behavior.

## 2) Giving Responsibilities

Giving responsibilities is an intrinsic natural consequence of behavior and is greatly effective when deserved. It can be given to every pupil according to his interests and capacities. Children may be given leadership, monitorship of school activities and societies, traffic duties, or may be asked to be responsible for the classroom ... etc.

## 3) Group Approval

Group approval as expressed by class applause when a child shows signs of cooperation or other desirable traits.

In conclusion, as few punishments as possible and as much praise as possible, will be helpful in bringing the pupils up to acceptable social standards. But complete effective socialization of the pupil is not possible when causes of misbehavior are not

remedied, when preventive measures are not taken, and when school and home conditions are not improved.

## CHAPTER IV

### TOWARD CONSTRUCTIVE, PREVENTIVE DISCIPLINE

If the Syrian public primary schools are to achieve their objectives in producing future citizens - men and women able to serve their country with their sound bodies and minds, unfavourable conditions in school, home and community should be improved. This would involve mainly the reorganization of primary education, and the redirection of teachers, which will be our main concern in the present chapter.

#### A. REORGANIZATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

The reorganization of Primary Education is necessary so that effective all-round development of pupils may be possible. In spite of the great improvement which took place in Syrian primary education during the last educational reform, there is still much to be done. The aim of primary education and its organization should be reviewed in terms of the pupils' welfare. Primary instruction, school life and facilities must be reconsidered in terms of pupils' mental health and his all-round development. A guidance program must be established in our schools.

In the present chapter, we do not propose to suggest a complete reorganization of primary education, but merely to deal with those problems most significant to children's education and school discipline, namely:



1. Primary instruction
2. School physical conditions
3. Pupils' health
4. Child study
5. Cooperation between home and school
6. Democratic rule

### 1. Primary Instruction

Instruction and its methods constitute an important factor in the moral development of pupils. In its broadest meaning as conceived by Dewey, moral development consists in the development of the social intelligence, social power and social interests. <sup>(1)</sup>

In connection with primary instruction we have to deal with the following problems:

- a) Primary curriculum
- b) Co-curricular activities
- c) Methods of teaching
- d) Examinations.

#### a) Primary Curriculum

The curriculum of the school, whether in quality or quantity influences character development. As to quantity, a barren, meager course of study as well as an overloaded one does not permit the development of a vital, moral-social spirit, not

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(1) Dewey, John, "Moral Principles in Education", Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1909, pp. 42-43.

to say anything about causing misbehavior. Therefore the course of studies should be long enough to occupy constructively the academic year. As to quality, the curriculum should satisfy two criteria: (i) the needs and interests of the child; (ii) the needs of the country or community. The course of study in the Syrian primary school has been submitted to a reorganization which was accomplished in 1951, with the view of satisfying the above mentioned criteria. Many modifications were made in the curriculum of each grade in order to make it interesting to children and commensurate with their mental level. Materials, on the whole, are now more related to the children's life. Pupils and teachers have been relieved from overloaded curriculums, except in the upper grades of the primary school where the need for preparation for examination is more urgently felt. In general, the subject matter can be achieved by pupils without overstrain. The Ministry of Education has issued directions to teachers in relation to each course, emphasizing quality of subject matter rather than quantity, and urging teachers to pay greater attention to pupils' thinking rather than to memorizing.

It is fair to remark that the trouble in the primary school is less related to curriculum than to the teacher and methods of instruction which may be faulty or unattractive. Nevertheless, we hope for better modifications in the course of study.

Speaking about the curriculum, we should give some consideration to ethics or moral instruction. It has been accepted

by modern educators that the influence of moral instruction, even at its best, is comparatively small when the whole field of moral growth is taken into account. In line with this new educational trend, the new program of studies of the primary school has eliminated the periods given to ethics in the three lower primary grades, and assigned two weekly periods for ethics-civics in the two upper grades. (1) Hence, moral instruction in the lower grades

is given along with other subjects, mainly religious instruction and "object lessons and environment observation" *دروس كوشة و ملاحظه كوشة*

. The teachers are urged to profit from all lessons to teach pupils moral ideals. This indirect approach is undoubtedly helpful; at the same time, it is well to remember that precepts are ineffective if not exemplified by adults in the school and by pupils themselves. There are many things that are caught, not taught; attitudes and appreciations are of the kind. It has been said earlier that moral instruction should be secularized; now it may be added that in our schools, the teaching of morals should be given in more attractive ways, in order to produce the emotional disposition of children and to reach their deepest attitudes. In general, the lesson on ethics is not interesting and usually ends by a summary of the lesson written down on the pupils' notebooks in order to be memorized and recited.

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الجمهورية السورية . وزارة المعارف ، المواد المعدلة من منهج الدراسة الابتدائية (1)

b) Co-curricular Activities

Where can the child practise the precepts and moral ideas he is taught? How can he build desirable character traits? Of course, the life of the school as a social institution should enable him to become a socialized person. It should provide him with suitable opportunities, the most important of which are co-curricular activities.

These activities put into effect the modern educational principles of play, freedom and self-realization. They allow children to live in the present and to enjoy childhood. They make possible healthy social relationship and thus favor social growth. Positive character traits are acquired in a normal way. Moreover co-curricular activities constitute occasions where democratic life is practised; they allow pupils to make decisions and plans and thus leading them along lines of self-determination and self-reliance. Finally, as they provide outlets for emotional drives, they decrease misbehavior and permit redirection of pupils' energy into useful channels.

In the reorganization of the primary education, activities were introduced for the first time in the primary schools. The new program of studies, assigning two weekly periods to "free activities"<sup>(1)</sup> in each primary grade, was put into effect since November 1945.

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(1) From Matthews, Roderic D. and Akrawi, Matta, "Education in the Arab Countries of the Near East", American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1949, p. 559.

Generally speaking, however, the spirit and aims of free activities are not well grasped by teachers. A great number of them, still believing in the superiority of academic subjects, consider the free activities secondary and a loss of time. When pressed by examinations or the need for covering ground, they usually borrow the periods of free activities filling them with academic lessons, especially arithmetic. Even first graders fall victim to this unwise practice and are thus denied the pleasure and profit of free activities. These teachers unintentionally do harm to their pupils in many respects, even in academic achievement. Probably they would change their attitudes if they knew that the effect of participation in activities upon scholarship has proved to be always favorable. <sup>(1)</sup> In other words, the pupil who has an integral part in the social life of the school does better academic work than the pupil of equal ability who does not.

We therefore need more activities than is usually available in our schools, namely musical, drawing, painting, mechanical arts, homemaking, marketing ... etc. We also need the redirection of the attitudes of teachers and principals toward recreational programs as well as equipment and such facilities as gardens, workshops ... etc.

c) Methods of Teaching

Methods of instruction are more significant to the

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(1) Cole, Luella, "Psychology of Adolescence", Rinehart and Company Inc., New York, 1948, p. 266.

problem of discipline than the curriculum. Although good teaching and teaching aids are found in some schools of Latakia, yet methods of teaching are, on the whole, not suited to primary pupils. Consisting mainly of the lecture method, or the formal Herbartian five steps, they render the process of learning a dull one, and account for some types of misbehavior resulting from boredom. Moreover, these methods do not meet pupils' needs for activity, or their individual differences. The scarcity of teaching aids makes learning abstract and difficult. Emphasis of teachers is, generally speaking, on memorizing rather than the development of thinking, observation and practical skills.

The improvement of teaching methods is possible when more trained teachers are supplied, and in service teachers are given further training or experience.

#### d) Examinations

Examinations constitute a serious problem in the Syrian system of education. Primary Public Examinations toward which the efforts of both pupils and teachers are directed block the way to effective education. Annual grade examinations are no less detrimental to education in many respects. They injure the pupils' health because of the stress on the memorization of material needed in the examinations. The overstrain and worry, especially before examination time, are detrimental to the mental health of the pupils. Moreover, the stress on marks encourages the development of undesirable traits, such as deceit and egoistic tendencies resulting

from individual competition among pupils. Positive character traits are difficult to build under the unfavorable conditions created by this type of examinations. Therefore, examinations should be re-considered with a view to improving them and introducing more objectivity into them.

In order to lessen the evil effects of primary public examination, the authorities concerned will do well to study the reorganization of the primary examination in Western countries, and to see the possibility of replacing them by a report given to the pupil showing that, in the judgement of his teacher and principal, he has satisfactorily completed his primary education. A citizenship record may very well replace the conduct mark and show the pupil's progress in this respect.

Meanwhile, teachers should be led to realize that examinations are not ends in themselves but means of diagnosing the pupils' achievement and difficulties and of improving methods of teaching.

## 2. School Physical Conditions

In general, the primary public school buildings in Syria do not favor effective education. A large number of them, particularly in cities were originally built as houses to accommodate families. The greater number of these buildings have small rooms and small courtyards. Only a few school buildings, owned by the government or municipalities satisfy the sanitary conditions and educational necessities. Small courtyards limit the play of the

pupils at recess, and account for most accidents during play. Even in some schools in Damascus, playing and running at recess are forbidden. Toilet rooms are sometimes not enough for a well populated school.

Sanitary conditions in the classrooms, lighting, ventilation may be fair in government-owned buildings and in some of the rented ones, but they are often inadequate and detrimental to the health of pupils.

The increase of school population in the last few years has resulted in the increase of the size of classes. Over-numbered classes are commonly found, for instance, some fifth grades in Latakia have (45) pupils, and some first grades (75) pupils. Such numbers in a class render education and discipline difficult. In an overcrowded room, a desk for two pupils may be occupied by three or four, which makes some school activities impossible, not to mention troublesome behavior, such as squeezing others, talking, and cheating.

The need is for better schools, with good sites, spacious playgrounds, large classrooms, as well as for the decrease in the number of pupils in each classroom.

### 3. Pupils' Health

Health is an important factor in child's behavior. Lack of vitamins in the body, insufficient sleep and rest or exercise affect the general health of pupils. Bad health conditions are reported by teachers to be the cause of poor work and irritability.



Malnutrition, light clothes in winter time are also reported. It is recognized by psychologists that normal behavior depends upon a balanced endocrine secretion, and that irregularity in this secretion accounts for some undesirable traits. For instance, thyroid overactivity is often the cause of restlessness. Its underactivity may produce sullen dispositions, inefficient work and lack of concentration.

In addition to bad general health, physical defects may lie at the root of some troublesome behavior. Visual or auditory defects, speech defects, carious teeth or inflamed tonsils and adenoids may lie behind some problem behavior. These cases often pass unnoticed in our schools and hence are not cared for.

The Ministry of Education tries to promote pupils' health in many ways, such as improving school conditions, introducing lessons on Hygiene, and making the curriculum less overloaded. These attempts are really praiseworthy, but insufficient. In my opinion, these measures should be supplemented as follows:

- 1) Provision for physical examinations of the pupils in the school. The pupils' general health and sensory organs must be examined at the beginning of the year and periodically after that.
- 2) Well-to-do parents must be asked to care for the treatment of their children's defects. Those of the low economic group must be treated without charge.
- 3) Provision of poor pupils with milk, free meals, clothes and soap.

- 4) Building up of health habits in the pupils.
- 5) Better facilities for physical training and games.

#### 4. Child Study

It is an outstanding characteristic of the progressive school in some Western countries to study the pupil in all respects. Data concerning his all-round development and family conditions are kept in school records and consulted whenever necessary. These records include data about his health status, academic and social achievement, family social and economic status, home facilities, past experiences, interests, and all that may help in studying him.

It seems to me that in the Syrian primary schools there is great need for studying the child and keeping records of this study. At the present time, pupil's file contains only his birth certificate and a record of his attendance.

Serious cases of behavior need the assistance of experts, both psychiatrists and psychologists. In Syria we need child guidance clinics which should in the course of time be established at least in big towns.

#### 5. Cooperation Between Home and School

Primary school children come from different social backgrounds, with a host of habits acquired at home. They are largely the product of the economic and social status of their families. The teacher who is asked to continue their education and to correct educational errors committed by their families, cannot act up to

his responsibility unless he knows the family background of each pupil. His best source of information is the parents. The necessity of parent-teacher cooperation comes clearly to the fore in cases of troublesome behavior which may show itself even under satisfactory school conditions.

Home-school relationship is essential not only in cases of misbehavior, but also in ordinary school life. So far as the Syrian school is concerned, this relationship is usually confined to the former situation. Even in cases of behavior problems, cooperation between parents and school is rare. Parents are mostly informed about gross violation of standards of behavior. Informing parents is sometimes not accompanied with positive measures calculated to work out a solution for the child's difficulty. Sometimes, the interview between the parent and the teacher or principal, held in the school, ends by a harsh punishment of the child at home. Such interviews aggravate the causes of misconduct, and strike terror in the heart of pupils. Some teachers, however, reported to have advised parents to use kindness with their children rather than punishment. Under such circumstances, teachers have priceless opportunities for the modification of parental handling of children.

Usually, in disciplinary cases, the pupil's guardian is asked to come to school for a conference. Teachers meet with two types of guardians: the cooperative and the uncooperative. Cooperative ones discuss the problem with the teacher or principal, find out the causes of misbehavior, and offer their wholehearted

assistance. Uncooperative guardians, on the other hand, display indifferent attitudes and even refuse to come for a conference. In the latter case, the teacher should visit them at home, and courageously persuade them and solicit their help.

Normal relations between the school and the home must be established in ordinary school life. The teacher must be asked to meet with the guardian of each of his pupils during the first days of admission, to converse with him, and to gather information about the family conditions and methods of discipline used at home. He should ask the guardian about the child's interests, experiences, past illness and accidents.

Other ways of establishing good relations are giving parties to parents in the school on the occasion of national holidays, providing visiting days when parents may come to school, and visits to pupils' homes. These ways break the barrier that exists between parents and teachers, and make possible the harmonization of their joint efforts in the interest of the rising generations.

Teachers should be led to realize the importance of establishing such cordial relations with the parents.

## 6. Democratic Rule

We stated earlier that autocratic rule is the prevailing type of control in the Syrian primary school. Autocratic relationships between principals and teachers on the one hand and teachers and pupils, on the other, have their bad influence on the school morale. They are a source of frustration of the needs of both

teachers and pupils for freedom of expression and of action. We stated also that studies revealed the effect of the autocratic atmosphere on children's behavior, and that misbehavior increases in a suppressive social climate and decreases in democratically ruled groups.

If our aim is to improve pupils' behavior, prepare pupils for a democratic life, and develop in them self-control, schools and classrooms should be run on a democratic basis. Democratic inter-relationships lift the group morale and spirit in the school, making for better discipline based on freedom and cooperation.

It is high time that the Syrian primary schools make their first approach toward democratic life by establishing a more friendly atmosphere and by delegating to the pupils the responsibility of making their standards of worthy conduct. In our schools, rules to be obeyed by pupils are imposed either by the official regulations or by principals and teachers. For instance, the official regulations stress, on the positive side of conduct, that pupils should build up desirable moral traits, come to school on time, should be clean, industrious, and careful about school materials. On the negative side, they state that pupils should not be absent from school without excuse, nor attend public places except the  
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الجمهورية السورية - وزارة المعارف - "النظام الداخلي للدراسة الابتدائية والأولية" (1)  
المدرسة ٦٢٤ - تاريخ النشر ٢٨ تشرين الثاني ١٩٤٩ ، العدد ٢٨ - ٢٢

Usually most rules are set up by principals and teachers, and are obeyed. If however, the standards of the class are set up by pupils, they will be more willingly obeyed, because they are not imposed from above but pupil-made. They will be also a constant stimulus to group morale and individual pride, and they will enlist cooperation, whereas imposed rules may provoke opposition. Moreover, standards emphasize the positive, desirable thing to do; rules stress prohibitions and inhibitions.

Pupils in every classroom may meet at the beginning of the school year, and work out their code of standards under the guidance of the teacher, who begins by challenging them to think carefully about all problem situations. He asks the pupils questions and allows them to ask questions for discussion like the following: What would you do if you stepped on someone's foot? What would you do if you broke a window? How would you behave in class? ... etc. After discussion, they agree on a code of standards such as:

- 1) I will be prompt.
- 2) I will exercise self-control.
- 3) I will have respect for other people's rights.
- 4) I will respect people's property.
- 5) I will be neat about my person.
- 6) I will be quiet when necessary.
- 7) I will be friendly and courteous.
- 8) I will try to be a good citizen of my school.

In the process of setting up standards, the teacher must observe the following remarks:

- 1) The standards set up in the school must not be artificial, that is, they must have much in common with the best standards in the community.
- 2) The teacher must have in mind the degree of difficulty in standards. For instance, the above mentioned standards would not be easily understood by first or second primary graders. Standards for the latter must be more specific and formulated in their own words.
- 3) Standards must be expressed positively. In other words, emphasis should be more on the rightness of conduct rather than on the wrongness, e.g. the statement "I will be quiet in the classroom" is better than "I should not talk in the classroom."
- 4) The practice of setting up standards by pupils should be gradual; otherwise it would be ineffective with pupils accustomed to autocratic rule. This practice may be begun in the first primary grade, and continued in the upper grades. When other classes show willingness to adopt the same procedure, they may be allowed to set up their own code, and they will succeed on condition great precautions are taken.

In relation to standards, some schools have maxims written on

special boards in halls or classrooms. This sound practice should be popularized. Some schools have their "maxim of the week" written by teachers alternately. It would be very helpful to have a citizenship report in classrooms, written by pupils and containing suggestions that make for a good day: "be truthful, do your best at work, be on time, be neat." This may bring higher standards and each one strives to make each day a good one. <sup>(1)</sup>

All teachers in the school should see that standards be practised, so that consistency and harmony in their efforts make the establishment of good habits possible.

If we claim that democratic inter-relationships should be established between pupils and teachers, it goes without saying that they should be established in principal-teacher relationships.

Supervisors and principals must deal with teachers in a more friendly, brotherly manner. They should all work in an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual give-and-take. Not a small proportion of primary teachers feel insecure in their relations to their superiors. They are afraid of expressing their ideas and making requests and suggestions. Some newly trained teachers find their freedom limited in trying to apply their progressive views, because their principals happen to be conservative or autocratic. The dangers of autocratic administrative procedure lie in that teachers tend to apply autocratic procedure in their classrooms,

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(1) Hockett, John A. and Jacobsen, E.W., op. cit., pp. 222-225.



or to develop dislike for their work. When more freedom of expression and experimentation is given to teachers, and when a more friendly atmosphere is available, the school will work more harmoniously for the welfare of all, especially the pupils.

#### B. REDIRECTION OF TEACHERS

The significance of the teacher's role as an instructor and educator is above question. The Syrian primary teacher occupies the most important position in children's education. Even under unfavorable home and school situations he can, by his professional competency and strong personality, compensate for other factors in the child's life. Therefore the greater attention in our program of improving discipline must be directed toward his re-education.

Improving school conditions and organization would be ineffective if teachers' attitudes toward discipline are not directed. The need for reeducating teachers is made clear when we recall what we previously said about their unwholesome attitudes. Teachers' attitudes toward character education, as subordinated to academic achievement, must be redirected. Teachers should be led to pay great attention to the development of positive character traits in the pupils as well as to the correction of undesirable ones. The type of absolute control, which is applied in schools and classrooms, and is repressive of pupils' interests and freedom, needs to give way to a more friendly home atmosphere. Some teachers should be motivated to depart from using fear as a dominant type of control and correction, and to lean more toward kindness.

Teachers should also be motivated to adopt the mental hygiene point of view in child's education. Their attitudes toward specific types of behavior are, on the whole, unwholesome from the view point of mental hygiene. The problem child is conceived by them as the overtly disturbing one, and little attention is paid to the passive traits detrimental to the pupils' future adjustment. Teachers must be led to pay greater attention to these traits.

When we come to serious cases of misbehavior, teachers have more or less sympathetic understanding. They understand their causes but in trying to remedy the situation, they generally follow uneducative procedure. Handling of disciplinary cases is sometimes not only uneducative, but also detrimental to pupils' mental health. Therefore, teachers must know more about the nature of childhood and the psychology of the child, and must realize that misbehavior may be normal activity, or misdirected energy or a symptom of maladjustment. Moreover they must learn to handle cases in the light of the psychology of behavior. Teachers should not only know about the detrimental effects of harsh punishments but should also know about wholesome methods of correction and motivation.

Attitudes of teachers toward instruction and organizational matters need reconsideration. Their attitudes toward their job, examinations, co-curricular activities, child study, and the establishment of normal relations with homes should be reeducated. This being the case, the problem of discipline becomes to a considerable extent a problem of reeducating teachers.

Before suggesting a remedy for this situation, the causes of the present teachers' attitudes must be made clear.

In my opinion the main cause of teachers unwholesome attitudes is insufficient proper professional training. The state of discipline is better understood when we know that the majority of primary teachers in Syria are merely holders of the Certificate of Intermediate Studies or the Certificate of Secondary Studies. Graduates of the teachers' training colleges are by far less in number than untrained teachers. Even the graduates of teachers' training institutions are not receiving enough professional preparation, even though they display more considerateness toward the mental health of the pupils.

It has already been pointed out that teachers have, on the whole, educationally acceptable views on the administration of punishments as well as on the aims and phases of discipline, that there is a great discrepancy between their theory and practice, and that this is largely due to frustrating situations in the life of teachers. Therefore, any program of reeducation of teachers should involve two aspects:

1. Professional training.
2. Provision for teachers' security and recognition.

#### 1. Professional Training

Professional training may be effected in two basic ways:

- a) Training of in-service teachers,
- b) Training of prospective teachers.

a) Training of In-service Teachers

The movement for training of in-service teachers with a view to developing the professional spirit of teachers while at work should be carried out more widely in Syria, under the guidance of the Ministry of Education and the sponsorship of educational supervisors and professors of education and psychology. It should include the following measures:

1) Provision for summer sessions, where lectures are delivered by able and experienced educationists on such subjects as education and its newest trends, methods of instruction, psychology of the child, adolescent psychology, the psychology of adjustment and mental hygiene. Educational problems may be raised and discussed. These refresher courses should be well planned and carried out over a period of time not less than two months.

Fortunately, the Ministry of Education, aware of the need and importance of training in-service teachers, has been carrying out such a program since 1950. In the summer of this year a teachers' conference was held in Damascus, which lasted for fifteen days. Another summer session, held in Latakia in 1951, especially for untrained applicants to the profession, extended over a period of ten days. Such programs should be more encouraged and supported by professors, supervisors, teachers and principals.

Furthermore, provision should be made for training teachers in practical subjects and co-curricular activities. The program must be diversified in order to meet various interests of teachers.

To our great pleasure, a session was held in the summer of 1951 in Damascus in order to train women teachers in home-economics. Another was held in the summer of 1952 for training men and women teachers in physical education. It is hoped that such programs will be extended.

2) Provision for more model teaching programs than is usually available in Syrian primary schools.

3) Provision for school libraries which contain mainly books and periodicals on education, psychology and sociology.

4) Provision for more educational radio-programs.

5) Teachers must be motivated to organize themselves into committees and associations for the purpose of studying problems of education in Syria, especially discipline, its status, its aims, and the factors influencing children's behavior. These committees must undertake to issue articles on the subject in periodicals and journals so that other teachers and the community may become aware of these problems and take practical steps toward their solution.

6) Teachers in every school must harmonize their work and hold periodical meetings during which problems of discipline may be discussed. In searching for a solution, principals and teachers must profit from the experience of the most able among trained teachers.

7) Finally, supervisors and principals must give individual help and guidance to teachers, especially beginners, on the proper handling of disciplinary cases. In the process of individual guidance, care should be taken that teachers feel secure and not

be accused of ignorance or weakness.

These responsibilities delegated to the supervisors and principals cannot be efficiently carried out because the number of supervisors is relatively small and because most of them are not sufficiently trained. Some principals of primary schools are even less professionally qualified than their teachers. Therefore, the efficient training of both supervisors and principals should receive more attention.

Supervisors and principals already in the service may be given a leave for one or two years to get further professional training, either abroad or in the Syrian University. Fortunately, the Ministry of Education has sent in 1951-52 a number of primary supervisors for one year's professional training in France. It would perhaps be better if this period is extended, and if some supervisors are also sent to the United States of America or England, so that the Anglo-Saxon point of view in education should increasingly be brought to bear on our practices.

When such refresher courses are available, professional standard of supervisors, principals and teachers will be raised and a tremendous improvement in education will result.

b) Training of Prospective Teachers

It is beyond question that a good professional preparation of prospective teachers must parallel the movement of training of in-service teachers.

Preparation of teachers involves two things. First,

supplying primary schools with a sufficient number of trained teachers; second, giving these teachers professional preparation. The Ministry of Education, in its attempt to remedy the shortage of well-trained teachers, opened in 1951-52 six additional one-year-course teachers colleges, two in each of Hama, Homs and Latakia, one for women and the other for men. These teachers colleges are intended to supplement already existing ones in Damascus and Aleppo.

The question that calls for reconsideration is that professional preparation in primary teachers colleges is not sufficient, and does not enable prospective teachers to be entirely effective in their work as educators. At the present time, two programs are available in teachers colleges: the one-year program admitting graduates of the secondary schools, and the three-year program admitting graduates of intermediate schools. Although the latter has proved more helpful in preparing teachers than the former, yet the professional courses offered do not give their graduates the mental hygiene point of view in children's education. This is clear from the following table representing the professional courses available.

	Periods per week out of 34		
	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Psychology and logic	---	3	2
Methods of teaching	---	3	4
Practice teaching	---	---	8

(1) From Matthews, Roderic D and Akrawi, Matta., op. cit., p. 386.

It becomes clear from the aforementioned table that professional courses are taught only in the last two years, and that they are not sufficiently diversified to give student teachers a deep knowledge of education and of the child psychology and development. Therefore, the program of teachers' colleges must include the following items:

1) More diversified psychological and educational subjects, such as elements of child psychology, the psychology of adolescence, the psychology of adjustment, social psychology, mental hygiene, and counseling and guidance.

2) More training in various practical subjects, such as manual work, music, drawing and co-curricular activities.

3) More emphasis on the handling of disciplinary cases during the periods of practice teaching. In this connection, it is necessary to initiate student teachers in guidance, by assigning to each one a pupil in the practice school. The student teacher should be held responsible for his guidance and the solution of his problems under the supervision of the professors concerned. Student teachers are thus led to make practical observations on children and to get acquainted with practical problems of education.

4) Initiating student teachers in the techniques of visiting the home of their respective pupils, thus teaching them the right approach to parents.



## 2. Provision for Teachers' Security and Recognition

The second aspect in the redirection of teachers' attitudes and disciplinary techniques consists in giving them security and recognition which are essential to their mental health.

Physical as well as psychological well-being of the teacher is a prerequisite to success in his work. The teacher with a weak body, or who is not emotionally and socially well-adjusted being possessed by worry and anxiety, is a curse against education. Therefore, the Ministry of Education as well as the community should strive to provide teachers with living conditions conducive to their mental and physical health.

Financial security on the part of teachers is mostly needed in Syria and constitutes the basis for other types of security. Financial insecurity causes the overconcern of teachers about matters of living and draws their energies away from their work.

A glance at the following figures is enough to give us an idea as to how low teachers' salaries are, at the beginning of their professional carrier: Graduates of primary teachers' colleges start with a total salary of L.S.190; graduates of secondary schools, L.S.147; graduates of intermediate schools, L.S.130.

These salaries are no doubt inadequate to provide teachers with good living conditions. They even deny them the bare necessities of decent living, especially when they are responsible for large families. Raising teachers' salaries would safeguard them against worry and ensure their physical and mental health.

In addition to financial security, teachers should be

given security in their relationships with their superiors, whether supervisors or principals. Furthermore, teachers' sense of security will not be complete if they are not provided with recreational activities which permit them to develop well-balanced personalities.

Finally, recognition of teachers' efforts by their supervisors is absolutely essential, and is conducive to a greater measure of devotion to the profession. Teachers should receive more recognition not only from their superiors, but also from the community at large. This recognition may be expressed either orally or in writing. Perhaps the best means of encouraging teachers is to improve the system of promotions, so that not only years of service are taken into consideration, but also efforts and devotion may be given their right values.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, when in an improved school organization, teachers adopt the mental hygiene point of view in dealing with pupils, when they refrain from using uneducative punishments and handle pupils more sympathetically, when they show more concern with the development of positive character traits in pupils, and embody the moral ideas they preach, when they can create a wholesome home atmosphere and follow democratic procedure rather than autocratic rule, when they acquire more skill, and adopt the practice of studying the individual pupil in cooperation with the parents and under the guidance of sympathetic and professional

administrators, when they are happy, secure and duly recognized, then and only then will irregular behavior be reduced to a minimum, and pupils' all-round development be ensured.

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A P P E N D I X

Questionnaires  
of the  
Experiments.



Experiment I

..... Teacher

..... Woman Teacher

The aim of the following questionnaires is to know the teachers' opinions about disciplinary problems in schools and their treatment.

Part I

Below you have seven opinions about the aims of discipline. Please arrange them in order of importance, putting 1 before the most important and continuing on till 7, before the least important.

- a) Retribution.
- b) Deterring the wrongdoer through fear of punishment.
- c) Formation of habits of obedience and submission.
- d) Provisions of conditions helping students to acquire knowledge and habits conducive to their welfare and that of the group.
- e) Not to disturb other classes.
- f) Self-discipline.
- g) Correction of misbehavior by making the student understand its personal and social harms.

Part II

Do you consider the following corrective measures useful?  
Please put a cross mark before each measure, in the brackets corresponding to its degree of usefulness in your opinion.

	not useful	sometimes useful	often	most often	always
1. Beating	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
2. Sarcasm	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
3. Kind reproach	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
4. Reducing school marks for misbehavior	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
6. Sending out of the classroom	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
6. Sending the pupil to the principal for correction	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
7. Giving additional work for misbehavior( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
8. Detention after school( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
9. Suspension for gross misconduct	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
10. Non-promotion for misbehavior	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

### Part III

Below are some opinions you may or may not approve.

Please write the letter (T) before each statement you think true, and (F) before each one you think false.

1. The teacher has the right to avenge himself on the student offending him.
2. The teacher can realize the desired end of discipline by terror.
3. A good disciplinarian makes much use of punishments.
4. Threats is as effective as appeal in the formation of good habits.
5. Punishment is effective no matter whether the student understands the reason for it or not.
6. A mild punishment applied is better than a severe one threatened but not applied.
7. In most cases, an immediate punishment is better than a delayed one.
8. Punishment and rewards should be of the nature of the misdeed.
9. Sometimes, it is desirable not to punish the student before the group.
10. There is no harm in punishing the class for an offense committed by one of its members.

### Part IV

The following list represents types of irregular behavior falling into three categories, according to their degree of seriousness. Please arrange them into these categories, by putting (1)

before each type you think most serious, (2) before the lesser serious, and (3) before the least serious.

Cheating	Resentfulness
Cruelty and bullying	Shyness
Destroying school materials	Stealing
Disobedience	Tardiness at school
Obscene talk	Truancy or unexcused absence
Overcritical of others	
Untruthfulness	Unsocial

Part V

Describe briefly a disciplinary case you met in your class, and state its causes and your treatment of it, or, give your remarks or views about discipline.

Experiment II

..... Teacher

..... Woman teacher

Part I

Teachers in the elementary school encounter difficulties and problems on the part of pupils in the classroom and outside of it. Our aim is to study these problems. We ask teachers to cooperate with us by answering the two following questions:

Note: Please answer the questions frankly and without discussing them with other teachers. Do not sign your name; it is enough to write "teacher" or "woman teacher", so that we could distinguish between girls' problems and boys'. Please hand in the paper in a closed envelope.

Question 1

"Describe as accurately as you can something a pupil in your class did which you thought was wrong and what measures did you take in that case".

It is desirable to give the pupil's age, mental ability, industry, economic status, the situation in which the action took place, its causes, the lesson during which it occurred, the grade, and all that you think may throw light on the situation.

Question 2

Below is a list containing types of pupils' behavior. Our aim is to know the extent of their occurrence. We wish to have your personal opinion based on your actual observation in the school. Put a cross mark before each type in the column corresponding to your opinion. For instance, put a cross mark before the item "cheating" in the column "does not occur", if you think that cheating does not occur, and in the column "occurs in a great number of pupils" if you think so; and so on.

	Does not occur	Occurs in some pupils	Occurs in a great No. of pupils	In all
1. Cheating				
2. Bullying				
3. Destruction of school materials				
4. Disobedience				
5. Easily discouraged				
6. Fearfulness				
7. Laziness				
8. Inattention				
9. Insolence				
10. Talkativeness				
11. Whispering in class				
12. Obscene talk				
13. Overcritical of others				
14. Resentfulness				
15. Shyness				
16. Stealing				
17. Tardiness at school				
18. Truancy				
19. Unsocial				
20. Lying				

Note: If there are other types please report them.

To Students

Part II

"Describe briefly something you did in your last school which you think you should not have done. State what was the reaction of the teacher and what measures did he take against it."

..... معلم  
..... او  
..... معلمة

الغاية من هذه الاسئلة الحصول على آراء المعلمين والمعلمات في القضايا والمشاكل الانضباطية التي يحدثها الطلاب في المدرسة ، وطرق معالجتها .  
١٤ - لديك فيما يلي سبعة آراء في اهداف الانضباط الرجاء ترتيب هذه الاهداف بالنسبة لاهميتها متبدا برقم ١ للهدف الاكثر اهمية ومنتهايا بالرقم ٧ لاقلها اهمية .

- أ - مجازاة الطالب على اعماله
- ب - ردع الطالب عن تكرار الذنب لخوفه من العقاب
- ج - تكوين عادات الخضوع والطاعة لدى التلاميذ
- د - تأمين الشروط التي تساعد التلاميذ على اكتساب المعلومات والعادات التي تحقق سعادتهم الشخصية وسعادة المجتمع
- هـ - عدم ازعاج الصفوف الاخرى في المدرسة
- و - الانضباط الذاتي او الحر
- ز - اصلاح السلوك السيء ، بجعل الطلاب يدركون ما له من اضرار شخصية واجتماعية .

#### ١٤ - ان اللائحة التالية تمثل انواعا من السلوك الشاذ يمكن تصنيفها في ثلاث زمر حسب

درجة خطورتها او خطرهما . الرجاء ان تضع رقم (١) الى يمين كل نوع منها تعتقد انه يصنف في الزمرة الاولى في الخطوره ورقم (٢) الى يمين كل نوع تعتقد انه يقع في الزمرة الثانية خطورة ، ورقم (٣) الى يمين كل نوع تعتقد انه اقل الزمر الثلاث خطورة

ميل الطالب الى كثرة الحقن

الخجل الزائد

السرقه

التأخر في الحضور الى الصف

الهرب او التغييب من المدرسة بلا

عذر او استئذان

عدم حب المعاشرة والاخلاق

الغش والخداع

المشاجرة او اعتداء طالب على

طالب اصغر منه سنا

تخريب امان المدرسة

العصيان او التمرد

بذاءة اللسان

اكثر الطلاب من انتقاد الغير

الكذب

#### ١٥ - اذا كنت قد واجهت في صفك مشكلة مهمة تتعلق بالانضباط ، الرجاء ان تصفها بايجاز

وتذكر الاسباب التي ادت اليها وكيفية معالجتك لها . او - اذا كان لك رأى خاص وملاحظات في الانضباط الرجاء ايراد ذلك .



٤- هل تعتبر الوسائل التأديبية الاتية مفيدة ؟ الرجاء وضع اشارة ضرب ( x ) بمحاذاة كل وسيلة من الوسائل المذكورة ، ضمن القوسين الذين يناسبان الدرجة التي توافق اعتقادك .

- |   |     |                                 |     |
|---|-----|---------------------------------|-----|
| ١ ضرب الطلاب  | ( ) | لا تفيد تفيد في كثير من الاحيان | ( ) |
| ٢ التهمك على التلميذ المذنب                                 | ( ) | دائما                           | ( ) |
| ٣ التأنيب اللطيف  | ( ) | من الاحيان                      | ( ) |
| ٤ انقاص علامات الطالب في الدرس الذي يحدث الذنب اثناءه       | ( ) |                                 | ( ) |
| ٥ اخراج التلميذ المذنب من الصف                              | ( ) |                                 | ( ) |
| ٦ احالة الطالب المذنب الى مدير المدرسة لتأديبه              | ( ) |                                 | ( ) |
| ٧ فرض وظيفة اضافية على الطالب عقابا له                      | ( ) |                                 | ( ) |
| ٨ توقيف الطالب المذنب في المدرسة بعد الانصراف               | ( ) |                                 | ( ) |
| ٩ الطرد الموقت للتلميذ الذي اقترف ذنبا كبيرا                | ( ) |                                 | ( ) |
| ١٠ عدم ترفيع الطالب السيء السلوك من صف الى اخر في آخر السنة | ( ) |                                 | ( ) |

III- فيما يلي عدد من الآراء التي قد توافق عليها او لا توافق . الرجاء ان تكتب الحرف ( ص ) الى يمين كل جملة تعتقد انها صحيحة ، وحرف ( خ ) الى يمين كل جملة تعتقد انها خطأ .

- ١- يحق للمعلم ان ينتقم لنفسه بمعاقبة الطالب الذي يسيء اليه
- ٢- يستطيع المعلم ان يحقق الغاية المطلوبة من الانضباط بارجاب الطلاب .
- ٣- المعلم الذي يكثر من فرض العقوبات مؤدب قدير .
- ٤- لا يقل التهديد اثرا عن الترفيع في تكوين العادات الصالحة لدى التلاميذ .
- ٥- للعقاب اثر حسن في التأديب سواء افهم الطالب سبب معاقبته ام لم يفهم
- ٦- عقوبة خفيفة تنفذها خير من عقوبة شديدة تنذر بها ولا تنفذها
- ٧- في اكثر الاحيان يكون انزال العقاب مباشرة بعد ارتكاب الذنب خيرا من تأخيرها
- ٨- يجب على المعلم ان يتبع المثل القائل "الجزاء من جنس العمل"
- ٩- يستحسن احيانا ان لا ينفذ العقاب بالطالب امام رفاقه
- ١٠- ليس هنالك من ضرر اذا عوقب الصف كله لذنب اقترفته احد افراده

الخاصية - الكراد

التجربة III ، في وضعه  
II القسم

X - معلم  
- - - - -  
أو معلمة

يسترخر المعلمين في المدارس الابتدائية صعوبات ومشاكل تصدر عن التلاميذ في قاعة الدرس  
وإخراجها . وفابتنا دراسة هذه المشاكل . فنرجو من المعلمين التضامن معنا وساعدتنا في  
ذلك بالاجابة على السؤالين التاليين :

ملاحظة : الرجاء ان تجيب على السؤالين التاليين بصراحة تامة ، دون ان تتناقش .  
فيهما مع غيرك من المعلمين قبل اعادة هذه الورقة البناء ، والا تكتب اسمك على الورقة وانما يكفي  
ذكر معلم او معلمة . وذلك لتتمكن من التمييز بين المشاكل التي يحدثها التلاميذ وتلك التي  
تصدر عن التلميذات . يمكنك وضع الورقة بعد ملئها في غلاف منسق .

السؤال ( 1 ) :

الرجاء ان تصف بدقة عملا لم ترص عنه فإم به احد تلاميذك وان تبين موقفك والتدابير  
التي اتخذتها حيال ذلك العمل .

يستحسن ان تذكر في وصف الامور الاتية : عمر التلميذ - ذكاهم - اجتهادهم - حالته  
المالية - الشروط المحيطة بالحدوث واسباب وقوعه - الصف الذي وقع فيه - نوع الدرس - او كل  
ما تعتقد انه يلقي ضوءا على الحادث .

السؤال (٢) :

فيما يلي قائمة تشمل انواعا من السلوك يقوم بها التلاميذ في المدرسة والنهاية منها معرفة مدى انتشارها بينهم . من المهم ان تهدي رايك الشخصي في ذلك مبنيًا على الواقع كما تشاهده في المدرسة ، بان تضع اشارة ضرب <sup>على</sup> مقابل كل نوع في العمود الذي يوافق اعتقادك ، فمثلا ضع اشارة ضرب مقابل كلمة " الغش " في العمود " لا يحدث " ان كنت تعتقد بان الغش لا يحدث فعلا او في العمود " يصدر عن كثير من التلاميذ " اذا كنت تعتقد ذلك . وهكذا الى آخر القائمة .

يصدر عن جميع التلاميذ .	يصدر عن كثير من التلاميذ .	يصدر عن بعض التلاميذ	لا يحدث
	X		٠١ الغش والخداع
	X	X	٠٢ المشاجرة واعتداء الكبير على الصغير
	X	X	٠٣ تخريب اثاث المدرسة
	X	X	٠٤ التمرد والمصيان
	X	X	٠٥ سرعة اليأس
	X	X	٠٦ الخوف والخشية
	X	X	٠٧ الكسل
	X	X	٠٨ قلة الانتباه في الدرس
	X	X	٠٩ الوقاحة
	X	X	١٠ الشرثرة
	X	X	١١ الهمس في الصف
	X	X	١٢ بذاءة اللسان
	X	X	١٣ الاغراط في انتقاد الاخرين
	X	X	١٤ الحنق والامتعاض
	X	X	١٥ الدجل الزائد
	X	X	١٦ السرقة
	X	X	١٧ التأخر في الحضور الى الصف
	X	X	١٨ التهرب من المدرسة
	X	X	١٩ الانعزال وعدم الاختلاط بالرفاق
	X	X	٢٠ الكذب

ملاحظة : واذا كان هنالك انواع اخرى الرجاء ذكرها .

المجربة III في دسنة

القسم III

هدف بايجاز عملا قمت به في مدرستك السابقة تعتقد انه كان يجب الا يصدر عنك ، ثم اذكر موقف المعلم والتدابير التي اتخذها حيال ذلك العمل .