

The Committee appointed by the Educational Association of Virginia on "school discipline" beg leave to report, that in their opinion it is impracticable to establish fixed rules for school government. Public sentiment is so divided on the subject, & the methods of family training are so varied, that no uniform system can be well adapted to meet the general requirement.

If the subject of education could be of more importance at one period of our history than at another, that period is the present, & that it may be advanced to the highest state of efficiency, it is important that general cooperation be enlisted in its support.

It is therefore considered more advantageous to recommend for attention some general principles, & leave their application to the judgement & direction of teachers.

The selection of proper persons for the office of teachers is a matter of the first importance, & as its duties require love & comprehensive preparation, it should be regarded as among the most honourable & important professions, & be committed to those whose beneficial influence & instruction shall extend to morals & religion as well as to the intellect. The teacher should be the example to the pupil. He should aim at the highest attainable proficiency & not at pleasing mediocrity, unless he can teach those committed to his care to think & to work, & can impart to them --?-- with learning there can be (page 2) no real advance. He must study the character & disposition of his pupils & adapt his course of discipline to their peculiarities. Above all, he must be uniform, consistent, firm & kind in his conduct & teach more by acts than by ends (?). He should look upon the children under his charge not only as the future parents of another generation but also as heirs of immortality & while fitting them for usefulness in this life instil into their impressible minds principles of piety & religion; for if it is true as taught by history, that greatness rests upon virtue, it is equally true that religion is the fountain & support of virtue.

Should the daily business of the school be conducted on these principles & the pupils be trained in habits of obedience reverence & truthfulness, & be convinced that they are noble & lively in themselves, the main object of the teacher will have been attained.

In addition to these usual influences, a teacher in the discharge of his responsible duties should be clothed with all the authority of the parent, & be sustained by him so long as he shall intrust his child to his care. That he may be constantly informed of the conduct of his child, weekly, quarterly & annual reports of his progress should be sent him by the teacher, in which should be stated his demerit marks, for absence, late attendance & misbehavior. Certificates of advancement should likewise be given given to those who excel in studies & conduct. The system of punishment ought to be simple & mild as they can be made effective, & when coercion has to be (page 3) resorted to, it should be left to the parent. When administering restriction of recreation etc fail to produce the desired effect, & the pupil shall obstinately resist the parent expostulation of the teacher, & his amt of demerit shall exceed the max standard, there will no other recourse than to return him to his parents, as one unworthy a place in the school.

In connection with the subject, & as an additional incentive to the faithful & conscientious discharge of parental duty, the committee refer to a statement which the present Lord Shaftsbury is said to have made at a recent public meeting in London; that he had ascertained by personal observation that if adult male individuals criminals of that city, nearly all had fallen into a course of crime between the ages of eight & sixteen; & that if a young man should lead a virtuous life until he was twenty years old, there were forty nine chances in favour, & only one against his

continuing an honest life thereafter. How important it is for every parent to exercise the necessary control over his child until sixteen. This proper management would not be difficult & might be the means of saving him from crime -

Note: The Educational Association of Virginia appointed on Dec. 31st, 1866 General Lee as Chairman of the Committee On "School Discipline," and to report at length to the next annual meeting of the Association in Lynchburg on the 3rd Tuesday in July 1867. Apparently this is his draft of the report to be made.