

QUICK AND DEAD: TO TEACHERS

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Quick and Dead: To Teachers by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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E.H.

H. H. H. H. H.

I.

The hand of the Lord . . . set me down in the midst of a plain that was full of bones. Now they were very many upon the face of the plain, and they were exceeding dry. And he said to me : Son of man, dost thou think these bones shall live? . . . Prophecy concerning these bones : and say to them : Ye dry bones, . . . behold, I will send spirit into you, and you shall live. (*Ezekiel xxxvii. 1-5.*)

THE writers of this little book have both had long and wide experience in pacing the educational plain of teaching and training to teach, and the one thing that has more than others impressed itself

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upon them is the abysmal difference between teacher and teacher, lesson and lesson. That difference is not a question of talent, of endowment, of preparation ; these things may be equal. It is simply the difference between Life and its absence. In the hands of A, a lesson lives—that is, it germinates, throws off unexpected shoots and suckers, fructifies, grows *power* ; in the hands of B, one and the same lesson, prepared as carefully and fully, delivered on the same lines, is *dead*, it ends with itself ; it may be a neat, a satisfactory thing, it is not a satisfying thing.

These papers, then, are meant to concern themselves solely with what makes for living teaching and education ; they pre-suppose that the teacher possesses the

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needful scholarship, and begin only with its impartment. And if some warrant is needed for saying things confessedly obvious and in a quite true sense commonplace, the Two can only reply that they have found that the obvious is often passed by unnoted, and that the commonest things are not seldom theme for "enduring astonishment".

If into any teachers, and especially the danger-beset trained teachers, this little book be the means of "sending spirit," it will be worth while to have written it.

II. OF CHARM.

Some minds, romantically dull, despise physical endowments. (*Virginibus Puerisque.*)

MUCH time and thought are nowadays expended on the embellishment and adornment of the school class-room. And it is surely quite fitting that the general tone of the rooms in which children are to live for a number of hours each day should be bright, and cheerful, and pleasing, that the walls should be delicately tinted, that plants and flowers and pictures should abound. We do well thus to charm the eyes of the young, with intent that

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other and better things shall follow from the charm — Happiness, Cultivated Taste, Pleasure in the Beautiful.

But a professional eye turns with eagerness from these largely passive agents, and looks to the one who here holds sway, hoping to find a personality also endowed with the power of charm, to see one who is consciously and skilfully using all natural endowments as a means of fascinating the minds and bodies of the children who are here to be educated and trained.

Too often the main instruments of such charm lie neglected, or are positively misused, and the pity of this is great. The power of facial expression, for instance, often is telling wholly in the wrong direction. It may be that the face be-