

**PRACTICAL HINTS FOR
THE TEACHERS OF PUBLIC
SCHOOLS. VOLUME XIII**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649382347

Practical hints for the teachers of public schools. Volume XIII by George Howland

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GEORGE HOWLAND

**PRACTICAL HINTS FOR
THE TEACHERS OF PUBLIC
SCHOOLS. VOLUME XIII**

International Education Series

EDITED BY

WILLIAM T. HARRIS, A. M., LL. D.

VOLUME XIII.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SERIES.

EDITED BY W. T. HARRIS.

It is proposed to publish, under the above title, a library for teachers and school managers, and text-books for normal classes. The aim will be to provide works of a useful practical character in the broadest sense. The following conspectus will show the ground to be covered by the series:

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Practical insight into the educational methods in vogue can not be attained without a knowledge of the process by which they have come to be established. For this reason it is proposed to give special prominence to the history of the systems that have prevailed.

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INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SERIES

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THE TEACHERS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY

GEORGE HOWLAND

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE CHICAGO SCHOOLS



NEW YORK
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY

1892

LB1025
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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE present work belongs to the class of educational writings that deal with the art or practice of teaching. It treats of details of management. In our adopted classification, it falls in the fourth division, coming after (1) history of education, (2) criticisms and reforms, and (3) the theory or science of education.

The art or practice of education of course presupposes the theory of education, for it is the practical application of it. But while theory looks at the subject in view of the full scope of all its possibilities, practice singles out only what is of present utility, and neglects the rest. Theory aims to get a wider and wider view, so as to grasp the subject in all its bearings, and contemplate the entire range of possibility; but practice, on the other hand, strives to narrow its field of view, and specialize its act of attention to the situation that is actually now before it.

The two attitudes of mind are in this respect opposed to each other. The theoretic shrinks from action, and defers it, wishing to keep the question open till all the possible phases of it have been inventoried. The

practical attitude desires to close the question, and decide at once in view of what is already known.

Doubtless each of these tendencies is one-sided and incomplete, but each has advantages within its sphere. Few minds are nimble enough to move with ease from one tendency to the other. For the most part, the teacher who is theoretically inclined is lame in the region of details of work; while the practically inclined grows narrow-minded, and incompetent to seize new truth. Goethe's aphorism expresses this: "Thought expands, but lames; action narrows, but intensifies."

Again, if the theoretic mind undertakes a work on art or practice, it is apt to waste much energy and force in an attempt to be exhaustive, for it devotes space to considering remote possibilities at the expense of more thoroughness and pertinence in the treatment of those phases that concern the present situation.

The best books on art and practice, therefore, come from those writers who decline to enter upon the exhaustive consideration of their theme; for this would imply an undue expenditure of strength on remote and unimportant subjects. They select rather the most essential or the liveliest questions, and attack them with a zeal so intense that they move people to action. For action is induced by concentration of the mind on one phase of the subject. The equal contemplation of all phases neutralizes or "lames" action.

That our author, Mr. Howland, has happily chosen the ten topics which he discusses in this volume with so eminent practical wisdom is evident from the following mention of their general bearings.

1. Moral training, treated in Chapter I, for example,