

GEOGRAPHICAL GLEANINGS

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Geographical Gleanings by Frank R. Burrows

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FRANK R. BURROWS

**GEOGRAPHICAL
GLEANINGS**

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PART I.—“On Some Methods of Teaching Geography”

PART II.—On the Preparation and Teaching
of the Subject

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DEDICATED (BY PERMISSION) TO
THE RT. HONBLE. LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON
GOLD MEDALLIST OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, IN MEMORY
OF HIS YOUTHFUL PROMISE AT OXFORD, AND IN ADMIRATION
OF HIS MANHOOD'S ACHIEVEMENTS BY ANOTHER
FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNION

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is crucial for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part outlines the various methods and tools used to collect and analyze data. This includes the use of surveys, interviews, and focus groups to gather qualitative information, as well as the application of statistical software for quantitative analysis.

3. The third part details the process of identifying and measuring key performance indicators (KPIs). It explains how these indicators are selected based on the organization's strategic goals and how they are used to track progress and identify areas for improvement.

4. The fourth part discusses the challenges and limitations of data analysis. It highlights the potential for bias in data collection and the importance of using a variety of methods to cross-validate findings. It also notes that data analysis is an ongoing process that requires continuous monitoring and adjustment.

5. The fifth part concludes by summarizing the key findings and recommendations. It stresses the need for a data-driven approach to decision-making and the importance of fostering a culture of data literacy throughout the organization.

Preface

It has long been my hope that amongst the subjects taught in all schools Geography should have a fair proportion of time and attention. I have seen many signs of late that persevering efforts to press its claims on various bodies are beginning to produce some effect. I have therefore attempted to bring together some facts which shall be of use to my fellow teachers, and also help forward the cause to which I am so much attached.

I am well aware that there are many books already written on this subject and that very largely teachers can be their own best guides : but it is not always possible to get such books, and my experience has taught me that those who teach best are the best also to learn. All such would therefore be willing to follow the guidance of one who has, at all events, done what he could to make Geography interesting and of permanent value. I have had some experience of the manner in which the subject has been taught in many schools,¹ and the conclusion to which I came was that many men were willing to do more for it, and to make more of it, if they were encouraged by its inclusion in the list of compulsory subjects in examinations and therefore in schools. The Preparatory Schoolmaster was waiting for the Public School. The Public School was waiting for the Universities or the Army and other Examination Boards. If, as I believe, the untiring efforts of the Geographical Association are being crowned with success, no longer need we be met by that vicious circle. I need not mention the names of those to whom this reformation is due ; they occur at once to the minds of all students of Geography. I should like to dedicate this book to them were it not that I had found one whose claims as a Geographer are almost as

¹ See my report buried in vol. 6 "Board of Education Special Reports," 1900.

great as those which his many friends make for him as a Statesman.

The singular manner in which English people go to war, hoping, as Lord Rosebery said, "to muddle through somehow" has an exact parallel in their past ways of carrying on schools. It has been the custom to make out timetables and to endeavour to fit the teachers and the taught to them: in the process the authorities have closely followed the manner of that celebrated highwayman of Athens who tied his victims upon an iron bed and, as the case required, either stretched out or cut off their legs to adapt them to its length. Amongst other victims to this process have been the masters who have been told to "teach Geography." A general impression prevails that while you certainly require an expert for Mathematics or Latin Prose, to say nothing of Science, almost any one can teach "English subjects," and when gentlemen have applied for posts on my teaching staff they usually concluded the list of their acquirements with "the usual English subjects, etc., and am good at Association Football." I am merely writing of one particular type of school, but I know how widespread is the heresy that men and women can take classes in Geography without any special training. I began to teach myself to teach in 1879, I have my old notebooks by me still, and am glad to find questions for Test-papers in Geography which show that I was beginning to make out the lights of the harbour of truth through the fog of Statistics. I have been learning to teach ever since then; that is true in a double sense. I have been reading in order to teach, and have been observing my classes when teaching. They have varied in age from seven years to twenty, but of one thing I am certain: that very few of them from the Army candidate who had come from a Public School to the child who wept at parting from his mother, in my twenty-six years had been taught Geography properly.

The day of better things has dawned. From the accompanying list it may be seen that there is quite a literature on the teaching of Geography. The Board of Education has put out regulations and has suggested a syllabus. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge have recognized the subject. There is every disposition to treat Geography seriously; sometimes,

perhaps, the new student of the subject may even think somewhat too seriously.

In the address which forms the first part of this book and has been before the public for some time, I have expressed fully my views on Geography. It has at all events the merit of earnestness and has elicited letters from teachers as far apart as Beyrout and Philadelphia. In the reformation now taking place it has had some share. I feel that its appeal will still be welcomed even though things are better than when it was first delivered.

In the second part I have endeavoured to arrange the order in which a teacher should study the many cognate sciences before taking up class work and made some suggestions for the work in school. These are, I fear, lacking in that definiteness and scientific precision which are demanded increasingly in education. I would urge my readers to keep up with the subject by taking in the *Geographical Teacher*, the organ of the Geographical Association, in which the latest ideas and the most practical may be found, and to avail themselves of the courtesy of those in the Library of the Education Department, who have most kindly furnished me with the list that follows of books and articles on the teaching of our subject. I would like to add that amongst these some of the most striking to a learner who is in earnest come from America; for example, *The New Basis of Geography*, by Redway; *How to Study Geography*, by Francis W. Parker; and *Special Method*, by McMurry. I hope that many of us on this side of the Atlantic feel as proud of the thoroughness of the teachers over there as of our own leading men. One most striking instance of this is to be found in the *Geographical Teacher* Summer Number, 1905, entitled "An American Training College Course in Geography," by George W. Hoke, which is well worth reading. Of our own leaders such names as Mackinder, Mill, Herbertson must be noted. A new edition of Dr. Mill's *Hints to Teachers* is in course of preparation.

It must be remembered that so many types of schools are interested in this subject that it is not easy to write very definite instructions for teachers. The subject itself is so very wide that suggestions have to be of a general character. For these reasons I have mainly attempted to make the second