

**EDUCATION
THROUGH MUSIC**

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Education through music by Charles Hubert Farnsworth

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THROUGH MUSIC**

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EDUCATION THROUGH MUSIC

CHAPTER I

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING

ABOUT one per cent of our population has a formal education beyond the age of fourteen.* The musical instruction that is given during this period is for most people all the training that they ever receive in the subject. Hence it is of the utmost importance that the little time given to music should be spent in the most effective way. This requires a consideration not merely of the musical ends to be reached, but of the capacity of the pupil and his musical needs, involving a cultivation of the desire for the beautiful in music, and direction for its gratification under the social conditions in which he lives. Such a broad view of the subject demands that sound principles be followed and that a rational plan of presentation be employed. It

* In 1905-'06 the number of children registered as attending public high schools in the country at large was eighty-eight hundredths of one per cent of the total population; or, including the children studying at private secondary schools, over one per cent of the population was taking secondary education. David Snedden, *Charities and the Commons*. April 25, 1907.

may be of help if at the outset the principles upon which the instruction is based be formulated, and the necessity for a plan of teaching presented.

It is not always easy to differentiate between a method employed, which is the way a thing is done, and the principle that it is intended to follow, which is a general rule of procedure constantly needing common sense for its application.

No one way of procedure is the right way under all conditions; but the principles that underlie the application should have stability. Without this, the goal cannot be reached. The principles are few and explicit; they are the result of the experiences of many, and of the application of physiological-psychological laws. The actual method pursued, however, will be determined by the character of the students and the conditions under which the work is done. A principle requires a way, in other words, a method, for its expression, but the wise teacher knows very well that to confuse the two is to crystallize the method, from which it is but a step to dogmatism and stagnation. Hence one is constantly testing principles in order to separate the method useful only in a given case from that which is always applicable.

The principles that have controlled the presentation in the following chapters are:

- (1) Experience should precede formal instruction.
- (2) Where it is lacking, the teacher should supply the experience necessary as a basis for instruction.
- (3) The teacher should organize this experience, so that,

while a particular effect is observed and studied, its relation to the total effect shall not be lost.

(4) The motive or impulse in artistic education lies in the desire of the individual to express himself.

(5) The purpose of education through art is to quicken perception, clarify feeling, and stimulate initiative for the beautiful.

Of the five principles which the book emphasizes, the first demands experience as the prerequisite of all work. The second begins the teaching with management of experience, as for instance, in the rhythmic acting in the first grade, or the chord formation of the sixth, so that all the students in a class, not merely the talented few, shall possess the foundation experience for what is to be taught. The third takes the complex experiences that manifest the subject studied, as in this case music, and breaks them up by means of carefully arranged steps such as acting or picturing. In that way the particular experience, the nature of which the average student would otherwise be unconscious, is observed and felt, and made to form a basis for study, a definite object for notation. From the imitative song singing at the opening of the first grade work to the appreciation of the higher forms, the material has been so arranged that at every stage it shall relate to a definite preceding experience. In this way not simply a memory appeal will be made, but definite ideas developed, so vital, because of their relation to experience, that they can form a foundation for new ideas and through them lead to new experiences. This arrangement of the material with