

**MANUALS OF THE
SCIENCE AND ART OF
TEACHING, FIRST SERIES-
NO. V.: CLASS TEACHING**

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VARIOUS

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Manuals of the Science and Art of Teaching

FIRST SERIES—No. V.

CLASS TEACHING



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These Manuals, with the exception of the last of each series, have been written, at the request of the Literature Committee of the National Society, by men distinguished at their several Universities, and possessed of large experience either as teachers or examiners. The last of each series, that on Class Teaching and that on Apparatus, is the work in each case of a Lecturer on Method at one of the larger Training Colleges.

The writers have endeavoured in each case to connect the practice of teaching with the fundamental principles on which it should rest, and to bear in mind the capacities and needs of the particular class of readers for which these Manuals are specially intended. The chapters have been broken up into short paragraphs, with conspicuous headings, and simplicity of language has been uniformly aimed at.

In order to obtain greater clearness and precision, and to save cross-references from one Manual to another, each subject has been treated independently, and is complete in itself. This independence of authorship has necessarily caused some repetition of matter, but it will be seen that this slight addition to the bulk of the whole has largely contributed to the definiteness and completeness of the separate parts.

CLASS TEACHING.

CHAPTER I.

SCOPE OF THE SUBJECT.

1. A CLASS is a number of children, of similar standing and attainment, grouped for common work. It is a group that may receive definite and systematic instruction; instruction in which the lessons are so arranged that one prepares for that which follows, and in which, therefore, the later ones all grow out of the earlier. The advantages of class instruction are manifold. The class saves time. Twenty may be instructed in the same time as would be required for one. It thus sets the teacher free for other work. But it has greater advantages. Look at its forces. These are sympathy, emulation, and competition. The brighter ones are there to stimulate the dull. The special knowledge of some is made a common possession. And even the instruction of the dull, involving as it does the painstaking explanation and the repeated and varied illustration, becomes an advantage to the many.

2. Class teaching is a device to economise time and labour, and to utilise the forces which are found inseparable from a group; but *it does not sink the individual in the group*. Each must be as well cared for as though the instruction was to him alone. This is often overlooked. The class is addressed as a whole, and if there is a fair

amount of attention, the teacher is satisfied, which is a fatal mistake. The class must not be dealt with as a compound, but as made up of individuals. It must be dealt with as a skilful gardener deals with his garden, where each plant has the culture it needs, to the manifest advantage of the whole.

3. To succeed in this course its nature must be clear. A teacher must fully understand his work. He has to teach. This is a brief phrase, but it is full of meaning. At present we shall indicate but one or two of its bearings.

(a) To teach is to enable the learner to do.—

It may be to work with the mind, as in arithmetic and grammar ; or, with the hands, as in penmanship and drawing ; or, with the voice and ear, as in reading and singing. Its aim is always to give power and skill. Hence a child is not taught when it can merely repeat something, but only when it can do something. The development of the pupil's faculties and their discipline, that is, the placing them completely under his control, are the prime aims in teaching. Teaching does not do the work for the pupil. It provides work, opens out ways of doing it, and presents proper inducements to the pupil to address himself to it. An artisan does not do the work for his apprentice ; but he shows him how to do it, sees that it is done, and that it is done rightly.

(b) To teach is to instruct.—This is another aspect.

To instruct is to build in the mind. This implies that the work is to be substantial and enduring. But it implies more. The figure is often misinterpreted. It is not building on, but building in. It is not only informing the mind, but forming it. It is a process which puts the pupil into intelligent possession, in a methodical and systematic way, of any subject he is learning. It does this so as to secure that the thing learned is intelligently understood. But it extends

even beyond this. Instruction makes the matter to become, as it were, a part of the pupil's mind. It is not so much laid up in his memory, to be set forth in detail when asked for, as it is made part of himself so as to furnish all that he requires in any mental work he has to do. This difference between building on the mind, that is, putting things into the memory, and building in the mind, so as to incorporate what is given with the mind itself, should be clearly grasped. The former may be verbal only. The latter puts knowledge into the mind so that when needed it reappears with the stamp of the mind upon it, having an aspect of originality. We find illustrations in the facts of our personal history, or in things that have occurred again and again in our experience. We cannot put our hands on the first experience of such things as we can on those in memory. For instance, that fire burns, boiling water scalds, are facts not properly remembered; they are known. It thus appears that instructing is the process of informing the mind in such a way as to form it into an intelligent, thoughtful and active agent.

There are, so called, *modes* of instruction by which the mind is filled, not formed; in which it is simply a receptacle, not an active agent. But children's heads are not hollow spheres to be crammed. They are filled with brains that have to be moulded and invigorated by proper exercise. He is the best instructor, not who fills the head in the shortest time, but who gives greatest power in that time. It thus appears that while it is very important what we teach, it is much more so how we teach.

(c) **To teach is to form mental habits.**—A habit is an unconscious possession. Mental habits are such as imply the doing of mental work without any consciousness of the process. The mind is occupied with the thing to be done, and is not disturbed in the process by thinking how it is to be done. Illustrations are at hand in reading, pen-

manship, and early arithmetic. First lessons in these impose much toil on the teacher, and require much drill and very irksome labour from the learner. The progress is slow, because the mind is occupied with the mode as well as with the thing. But at length comes facility. This is due to habit. The teacher, to form such habits, has to see that the exercise is often repeated, that it is of sufficient length, and that it is so long continued, as at length to be performed with accuracy and rapidity almost without a thought.

(d) **To teach is to secure learning.**—Learning is the act of the pupil. It denotes that habit of attention, application, and diligence by which he does what belongs to him, under teaching or instruction; or in those silent exercises in which he has to use without aid his acquired power. To teach in this aspect is to place the pupil's work before him in an attractive way, to lead him by right methods, and to keep up his interest by a judicious use of questioning, challenging, and illustration—which are the teacher's tools.

Our subject will require attention to all things necessary to make class teaching efficient, exclusive of such as belong to the arrangement of the room, and the general management of the school. Its further prosecution will embrace the teacher, the method and subjects of instruction, and the pupil. In treating these there will be of necessity some repetition, the matters being so interwoven that a cross division is unavoidable.

CHAPTER II.

THE TEACHER.

1. **Manner.**—‘Manners maketh man.’ This is the motto of one of our oldest and most celebrated schools. It has a lesson for the teacher. He is what his manner is. If he is listless, aimless, and indifferent himself, then his children are listless, aimless, and indifferent also; but if he is earnest, devoted, and determined, they become so too.

(a) **Reality.**—Manner is the carriage, personal bearing, or mode of action characteristic of a person. It is the outward rendering of the man. Sometimes there is an assumed manner, but it never deceives, as it is impossible entirely to cloke that which is real. ‘No one can be a good teacher,’ says one of the Ancients, ‘who is not himself good.’ He means that it is impossible to assume and sustain the external accessories of good teaching when those things of which they should be the outcome do not exist.

(b) **Earnestness.**—A good manner is marked by *earnestness*. There is a real desire to benefit our pupils, to do our work well, and to influence for good those who are addressed. Earnestness is marked by geniality and pleasantness. These throw sunshine over the face, which is reflected on the class, or rather, they may be said to be rays of light issuing from the spirit within, and refreshing all on whom they fall. The face of such a one is known by its smile.