

PRIMER OF SCHOOL METHOD

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Primer of school method by T. F. G. Dexter & A. H. Garlick

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T. F. G. DEXTER & A. H. GARLICK

**PRIMER OF
SCHOOL METHOD**

A PRIMER OF SCHOOL METHOD

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PREFACE

THE young teacher used to spend four or five years learning his professional work. Theory and practice went on side by side. The practical work has now been limited to a one year's course, and theory has disappeared from the syllabus. Under these circumstances it is thought that many young teachers will more than ever require assistance to supplement their very brief and very empirical training. This little primer is a contribution towards that assistance, and it is hoped that it may be a real aid to those for whom it is written.

T. F. G. D.

A. H. G.

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CHAPTER I DISCIPLINE

IN learning the practical side of his work the young teacher has to face a double task. He has to learn not only how to teach, but to manage; to become not only a teacher, but a disciplinarian; not only to educate, but to rule. Both conditions must be fulfilled if he is to be a success, and it is pertinent to note that the failures of the teaching profession are found almost exclusively on the disciplinary side. Successful teaching rests upon capable discipline, hence the power to maintain discipline must be regarded as the first requisite of a good teacher.

I. DISCIPLINE DEFINED

A great variety of meanings now attaches to the word discipline. From the teacher's point of view, its chief characteristic is that *it is a force for moral training*. It is the natural trainer and corrector of character, and should embrace the control, regulation, and guidance of all those forces which contribute to the growth of character.

II. HOW TO MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOL

1. **BY GOOD GOVERNMENT.**—Discipline implies government by rule. Rules imply restraint, hence—

a. They should be as few as possible.

For this reason over-government should be avoided. It is the antithesis of feeble government, and is as much to be condemned. The rules should deal with representative faults only, and should not waste themselves with details.

b. They should be well understood.

For this reason all duties and offences should be expressed in simple, clear, and precise language.

c. They should be reasonable.

The restraints of discipline should be made as little irksome as possible. Kindness wins assent. It is more profitable to persuade, to advise, and to instruct than to compel, although compulsion may, at times, be necessary. If the sense of freedom is to grow, as is necessary, the child's circle of freedom must be gradually extended. For this purpose a child should always be trusted within reasonable limits. He will then learn to respond to the confidence placed in him, and will gradually recognise that rational conduct conduces to general comfort, as well as to personal progress.

d. They should be regularly enforced.

Good government will also make some use of the older children as an aid to discipline:

(1) By persuading the elder children to show a good *example*. Admiration and esteem for the elder scholars is generally manifested by the younger ones, and this admiration often shows itself in the form of imitation.

(2) By allowing the elder scholars to exercise a certain amount of *supervision*, both inside and outside the school. They can control the games of the younger ones, or they can share them. They can act as monitors, assist in regulating assembly or dismissal, change of room or class, and generally hold a light controlling hand over their younger schoolfellows.

2. BY A PROPER USE OF PUNISHMENT.—Discipline must be obtained in one of two ways—by personal influence, or by force. "It is better to gain it by force, than not to gain it at all."

All offences should be graded. Punishment may be necessary at times, but the less the punishment, the better the government.

***a.* General Principles influencing the Selection of the Kind of Punishment.**—Most careful selection will be necessary.

(1) Punishment should be founded on a sense of honour, and no kind should be selected that has a tendency to weaken that sense.

(2) The selected punishment should be corrective and formative rather than retributive. It must deter, but it must only just be sufficient for the purpose. As a formative force it should not convey the idea of lasting disgrace, or all incentive to improvement is checked and character suffers.

(3) As in the case of rules, the punishment should be within the grasp of child intelligence, so as to gain the support of school opinion—a great aid to discipline.

(4) It should also be capable of being remitted if possible, so that a mistaken judgment on the part of a teacher may be corrected, as in the case of giving bad marks.

(5) It should be present or near, since the remote has little or no influence with children. For first offences, as a rule, it should be sharp, and in early childhood it should be short and sharp.

(6) Where possible, the punishment should be natural; that is, the punishment should bring its own consequences. Such discipline is sometimes described as "the discipline of consequences," as when a child is burned