

confident of your cordial coöperation in enabling me to do so. As I intend to furnish the December number of the *Journal of Education* (containing all needful information and suggestions as to the annual School Meetings to be held the second Wednesday in January, Annual School Reports, &c., &c.) to the Trustees of each school section in Upper Canada, I will transmit a sufficient number of copies to your address to supply the several school sections under your charge; and I must request you to have the goodness to address a copy to each of the Trustee Corporations concerned. I must also beg of you to favour me, between this and the first of January, with the post office address of the Trustees of each school section within your charge. The *Journal* will be addressed, not to individuals, but to "The Trustees of School Section No. —." What I desire from you therefore, is, merely the name of the post office at which the Trustees of each section shall be addressed.

5. Any suggestions which I may have to offer in regard to the school affairs of the ensuing year (which I hope will be more auspicious than any preceding one) will be found in the next number of this periodical.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

E. RYERSON.

EDUCATION OFFICE,  
Toronto, 30th Nov., 1852.

### THE TEACHING POWER.

It is a most fallacious notion, that if a man be a good scholar he will necessarily make a good teacher. We continually find men who possess plenty of knowledge, without having the slightest power of communicating it to others, especially to classes of children. To make a good elementary schoolmaster demands, above all things, a natural aptitude for teaching. A man who has such an aptitude will make a far better teacher, though he should possess only just the knowledge that he requires to convey and no more, than another with great attainments, but who has not this special qualification for the work. It is thus that we sometimes hear it paradoxically but truly observed of a man, that "he teaches more than he knows." He may not himself impart a great amount of actual information, but he so thoroughly trains the minds of his pupils, that they soon become accustomed to independent action, which is the ultimate object of all education. That man, of course, will make the best teacher who combines technical knowledge with teaching power; but we think most experienced instructors will agree with us, that the latter is far more necessary than the former. We are also of opinion that the knowledge is far more easily acquired than the special qualification, however much this may be despised. In fact, it appears to us that teaching power cannot be acquired at all. It may be much improved by training; but if a man does not possess it naturally, as a part of his original endowment, he will never possess it in any great degree. Technical knowledge may be acquired more or less by all; superior teaching power is the gift of nature, and is only possessed by a few.

The term *teaching power* affords in itself a confirmation of the fact, that the talent spoken of is a real natural faculty, peculiar to certain individuals. The Germans still more emphatically call it *Lehrgabe*, or *teaching gift*. We make these remarks, because the truth which we assert has not yet been sufficiently understood or acted upon in this country, and because this ignorance or disregard of it has been proved, and may still prove, an obstacle to the progress of popular education.—*English Journal of Education for September*.

### THE CLASSIFICATION, RECITATIONS, AND GOVERNMENT OF SCHOOLS.

Many teachers are now entering their schools for the winter term, and at this season a few suggestions will be appropriate, relative to the general arrangements of school, and plans for instruction.

The first object of the teacher, on commencing a school term, should be to classify the pupils. The usual time for school instruction is about six hours daily, hence, generally, not more than *three hundred minutes* can be spent in actual instruction, after deducting

time for recesses, changes of classes, &c. Now, if a school contains thirty pupils (which is a less number than most schools average), it leaves about *ten minutes* of instruction for each pupil, if not classified,

By arranging these thirty pupils into ten classes, each class might receive *thirty minutes*; and as many of the pupils would be in four or five classes, as spelling, reading, geography, arithmetic, and grammar, they would receive from two to two and a half hours' instruction each day. Here, then, is a great gain of time to the scholars by classification. Besides, the older pupils would receive much benefit by contact with the minds of other pupils in the class, which would otherwise be lost to them.

Intimately connected with classification are recitations. For these there should be regular and stated times, and the scholars should understand that when the time came for any recitation it must take place, and that no excuses of the pupil could delay it. It would be well to adopt some plan by which all the lessons may be learned by each pupil in the class.

In recitations teachers should endeavour by all possible means to draw out the mind of the scholars, to teach them how to learn, and how to use what they learn. In all school instruction it is the teacher's duty to develop those faculties and teach those principles which will make useful citizens and good neighbours. Probably the future conduct and usefulness of many may be determined for life by the influences of the very term of school which they are now attending. How important, then, that the influence of that school be such as shall conduct to paths of usefulness.

The government of school is of vital importance to its usefulness. Let it then receive much careful attention. Have but few rules, and those of a simple and universal character. Do *RIGHT*, is the all-important one, and it will apply to all the multitudinous cases of discipline which may come before the teacher. Impress the importance of a just and strict observance of this rule upon the minds of every pupil. Make them feel that they have a personal interest in all that relates to good conduct, order and improvement in the whole school.

By remarks upon general conduct, and by applying admitted principles of right and wrong to individual action, create a public sentiment in your school, which will frown upon everything bad, and approve of what is right in the conduct of the pupils. This accomplished, you will have a moral governor to regulate your school, whose influence will be tenfold more potent than any physical government which could be devised.—*The Student*.

### SCHOOLS AT HOME.

Few persons realize how much may be done in a thousand pleasant ways at home. Let a parent make a companion of his child, converse with him familiarly, put to him questions, answer inquiries, communicate facts, the result of his reading or observation, to awaken his curiosity, explain difficulties, the meaning of things, and the reason of things—and all this in an easy and playful manner, without seeming to impose a task, and he himself will be astonished at the progress which will be made. The experiment is so simple that none need hesitate about its performance. The first important requisite is, that there be mutual confidence between parent and child; then, in every season, and in every place, there may be such lessons and recitations as shall benefit both; imparting new facts and principles to one, and elucidating new views and giving them new force to the other. If at the barn, the boy may be required to give the principle of raising water by the pump, or some other question in hydraulics; if teaming or plowing, why the work is performed easier when the team is near the load than when farther removed; if in the morning when the grass is sparkling with pearly drops, how dew is deposited; or, if in the silent and impressive evening hours, why he is chilled in passing the valley, and finds again the genial warmth on ascending the hill. When around the fireside, daughters may state the principle upon which the smoke ascends the chimney, and why the air is warmest at the top of the room. At another time, why the "pitcher sweats" in the hot noon, or the "dough rises" in the pan.

By thus observing events as they pass, we are *always at school*; both old and young, teachers and pupils in turn. A new enthusiasm is kindled in the breast of each other, while new desires for improvement are awakened, and new sources for it are developed at each recitation.