

Any teacher who has felt this impulse, this inspiration (and what true teacher has not?) has surely forestalled me in the consideration of this odd subject, "The Homiletics of Teaching." The moral influence of the teacher, striking out through the forms, the suggestions, the wider applications of daily book-instruction,—this is what I mean by the preaching of teaching. It is a kind of moral *oratio obliqua*—not the direct, formal, pulpitering homiletics of the minister, but a certain sweet persuasive and pervasive preaching of character, tone, and look, suggestion, manner, turn of thought; a kind of aroma of personality, a preaching not unlike that of flowers and wood-odors.

The indirectness of this truly evangelizing influence of the Christian teacher is the secret of its chief power and charm. I am not one of those who stickle for definite and formal religious instruction or acts of religious worship in our public schools. In general, I distrust the helpfulness of anything which is purely formal; and I am convinced that there is little beyond formality in the religious exercises with which it has been customary to open the morning sessions of our public schools. But when religious and moral influences can be shed like sunbeams and dewdrops, so delicately, so softly, so unobtrusively that they become a part of the pupil's consciousness, as dewdrop and sunbeam become a part of leaf and flower-texture, then, I believe is uttered the true and potent preaching for youth. The teacher who lives the Beatitudes is better far than the teacher who merely reads them from the desk.

What a mistaken idea it is of preaching, that there must always be the oratorical element in it, that it is a clearly-defined function of voice, gesture, and formal homily. The minister in the pulpit is only one of many preachers. The birds hold sweeter and often better services than he; sky and wind also have their messages from God; the very stones will be preaching the sermons which their Maker has written in them. The mechanic preaches when he does good, honest, God-fearing work. The farmer preaches, well or ill, in the way he tills the ground. The doctor preaches, through sympathy, warning, encouragement, and the subtle force of character impressed upon character. Above all, the teacher preaches, through daily example, through mental and moral sympathy, through pure and noble interpretations of truth, through the whole moral and spiritual atmosphere which he diffuses about himself. These are better homiletics than any formal religious utterance.

Looking back over my own school-days, I must confess that I do not recall any inspirations or helps gained from what we