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EDUCATION.

Graduation in Teaching and Training.

In teaching, the educator has to study many things. He has to deal with infant minds gradually developing their powers; and as these unfold, suit his instructions, manner of conveying, and language employed to each stage of development. Adapting teaching to children of different ages, degrees of advancement and capacity, is certainly no easy task; but it is a task at which we must aim. Success in teaching, and the healthy development of the powers of the mind, depend so much upon it, that it should be made one of the indispensable qualifications of the teacher.—The object of the following hints is to direct attention to this very important subject.

Expanding—directing—and consolidating the powers of the young mind, should be the teacher's *first great object*. The exercises employed in doing this should be carefully chosen and specially studied. They should at first be exceedingly simple, and appropriate, attended with a constant repetition of the facts presented in them to the mind. In proportion as the mind strengthens and expands, its stores of ideas should be increased. As the pupil advances, as his mind gathers strength, and acquires grasp, exercises should be made progressively more adapted to his stages of advancement. But at no stage of advance should repetitions, —well connected repetitions, so as to form and ground in the mind a well conjoined outline of what is taught—be by any means neglected. Thus communicating one chain of thought after another, and of a character suited to its strength, and adding others in succession as it can profitably receive them, there is built up in the mind and memory of the child a regular and connected framework of knowledge intimately connected in all its parts, and forming as it advances a compact whole. The advantage of this permanent linking of ideas in the mind of the pupil, is, that by the law of association any one idea of a chain brought before the mind at any future period, calls up in their first order all the ideas, of

this chain as they were originally combined. Another thing not to be overlooked in education is, that the course of knowledge with the scholar must be *expansive* as well as progressive: from narrow infantile views to more general principles; from near confined conceptions to wide-world utilities; from initiatory beginning, and vague ideas of what is taught, to the facts, the truths of a living universe. Our schools must keep up with the advance of knowledge, and keep pace with the progress of the human mind, or they will prove false to their place and trust. The onward movements of society make it urgent. It cannot be evaded. We are not to trundle round and round forever in the old ruts of thoughts—clinging with blind faith to crude schemes and modes of instructions, which belong—where they originated—to bygone ages. The elevating onward tendencies of education must never be lost sight of. The progress of society and the advancement of education must ever keep pace. As the treasures of knowledge enrich, school progress should so advance, as to be able to take advantage of these,—be prepared profitably to draw upon them. [And without intelligent advances in systems of teaching this cannot be done.] The subjects of school study should be so modified and extended, and methods of teaching and training youth and storing their minds from the mass of facts, principles, and increasing knowledge, be so improved, as to afford more and larger opportunities and ampler means—to draw upon the labours of the great expounders of arts, sciences and nature, for more highly and more intelligently educating our youth.

My views of the graduation which should be followed in educating youth, I shall endeavour to explain in the following remarks, and illustrate by a few examples. In a previous communication I attempted to explain, and as simply as I could, how a child may be interestingly, and in a very short time, taught his letters and his first stage of reading. In this I shall begin at his next or second stage,—supposing that he can read easy lessons, give the meaning of what he reads,—define such words as may occur in his lessons,—express his own ideas a little on the subjects he reads,—and that his mind has, in some degree, been trained to reflect, judge and reason, &c. In this paper I solicit the attention of teachers to the following rules and remarks. In my next these will be followed up by passage-illustrations.

Regulate your teaching much by the following rules:—

1. Remember that prevention is better than cure. Therefore, begin teaching your pupils, first, by preparing their minds for the work, by object exercises, directing them how to think, reflect, judge and reason. And to prevent their falling into improper habits in thinking and doing, guide them carefully at every step of their work by example and illustrations, showing them how to *prepare themselves for reading each lesson, how then to read, define, explain and apply words, picture out truths, &c.* Beginning to teach them in this way will prevent the forming of a hundred injurious habits in thinking, speaking, reading; the forming of improper, incorrect notions about school and school work; and its