

what has to be said is said by the teacher, and the scholar is simply called on to assent; the tone of voice in many cases indicating what answer is expected.

Here is an extract from a nice little catechism on "good manners" that will serve as a good illustration of what I mean:

Q. Is untruthfulness a very common vice in children?

A. Yes.

Q. Are there instances recorded in Scripture of this sin being instantly visited by the punishment of death?

A. Yes.

Q. Ought any one to respect or esteem a known liar?

A. No.

Q. Would you willingly associate with, or make a companion of, any boy or girl known to be a liar?

A. No.

In a less degree I would have you distrust all answers which consist of single words. Every answer we get to an ordinary question is a fragment of a sentence, but it is only the sentence, and not the single word, which conveys any meaning; and the questioner, who understands his art, turns his question round until he gets from his scholars successively the separate parts of the sentence, and finally, the whole. If the teacher does all the talking, and the pupil only responds with single words, the questioning is bad. The great object should be to draw out with the minimum of your own words the maximum of words and of thought from him. Questions, too, should not be put which you could not answer yourself. All questions ending in the word "What?" and a large number of elliptical questions, in which the teacher makes an assertion, and then stops for the scholar to supply the last word encourage the bad habit of guessing. The practice of suggesting the first syllable of a word in an answer is one which no skilful questioner will ever adopt.

In putting a series of questions, whether for purposes of teaching, recapitulation, or examination, great care should be taken to preserve continuity and order. Each question should grow out of the last answer, or be in some way logically connected with it. As to the answers a word or two must be said. If the answering is bad, either you have been asking for what was not known, or for what had been insufficiently explained, in which case you should go back, and teach the subject again. Or there may be knowledge but no disposition to answer, in which case your discipline is bad, and you must fall back on some way of improving it. All random and foolish answering is rudeness, and should be dealt with as such. Do not leap to the conclusion that because your question is not answered, nothing is known about it. Alter its shape, or put a simpler one.¹ In a lesson on the pressure of the atmosphere you ask, "Why is boiling water not so hot on the top of a mountain as in a valley?" Now there may be no answer to this, simply because it needs a good deal to be said in answering it, and your pupil though knowing something about it, does not know where to begin. Keep it in mind, but for the moment, substitute simpler ones for it. Ask in succession "What happens when water begins to boil; what the bubbling means; what would have prevented the bubbling from beginning so soon; what would have caused the bubbling to begin earlier; whether the water can receive more heat after it begins to bubble; what is the pressure of the air upon a mountain as compared with that in the valley." To all these simpler questions you will probably get answers; now you can safely go back to your first question and give it again. Do not be impatient, and hasten to answer your own questions. Remember that by drawing out the knowledge of scholars and piecing it