

out of what seemed an unpromising lump of clay. The teacher is not bound to supply a lack of brains; but he is bound to do the best that can be done with the brains that nature has provided. Nor is he bound to *make* a willingness to improve and use the opportunities offered for gaining instruction; but he is expected to do all in his power to cherish and develop such a disposition.

The teacher from the lower motive is in danger of failing just here, in the *final results* of his work. I believe most firmly that the highest results can be won only by teachers who are willing to do a great deal of hard work and patient drilling, which will not be blazoned in the newspapers as the "Quincy System" or by any other title, and will add very little—at least immediately—to their reputation in the school-room or among any but the most judicious parents.

This leads me to say a word about the so-called "New Methods," of which we hear a great deal at present. In a great degree, as all persons who have any extensive knowledge of the history of education know, they are not new methods at all in any other sense than that their more general diffusion and greater prominence before the public eye are new things. Teachers of skill and tact in all ages have known that the living voice is far more potent than the printed page, and that matter, to be learned, must be presented in a form and manner suited to the age and attainments of the pupils. It is true, however, that there has been a recent revival of natural and effective modes of instruction, together with a development, in some single directions, of really original methods. Teachers had become in many of our schools too set in lifeless, mechanical ways, and the mere hearing of lessons had too much taken the place of lively, interesting, and effective teaching. The present

danger, I fancy, where new methods are eagerly sought for, is that the students will be amused and interested rather than taught and trained. The rebellion against text-books strikes me as extravagant. I am inclined to think that the best results will be gained by the union of oral teaching, accompanied by lively and telling illustrations, with a judicious amount of text-book study. A good text-book, and such there are on most subjects, although most of our best books are capable of improvement, gives a careful and well-digested systematic statement of the leading and most important facts on any subject, facts, the knowledge of which is indispensable to any one who wishes to be a master of that subject. Presented *alone*, the text-book is often dry and unattractive. Even if learned by heart, it is not understood and is soon forgotten. But if a boy or girl is made first to understand a matter by skilful oral or object lessons, and is *then* given a text-book, he reads it with interest and intelligence, and is often pleased by its complete and logical statement of facts and principles in their regular order.

The mere lesson-hearer was a defective teacher; yet if he made his scholars always *learn* their lessons, he accomplished one of the most important purposes of his office. The mere amuser of his scholars, nay, more, even the skilful expounder who keeps every eye and every ear attentive to him and arouses for a time a genuine interest in his subject, is a defective teacher, unless he also succeeds, either by the aid of a text-book or in some other way, to secure a deep and permanent lodgement of the things he teaches in his pupils' minds.

It would be interesting, had we time, to take up different studies and apply these principles to the methods of instruction in each of them. But, after all, the great desideratum in a