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Thought Power

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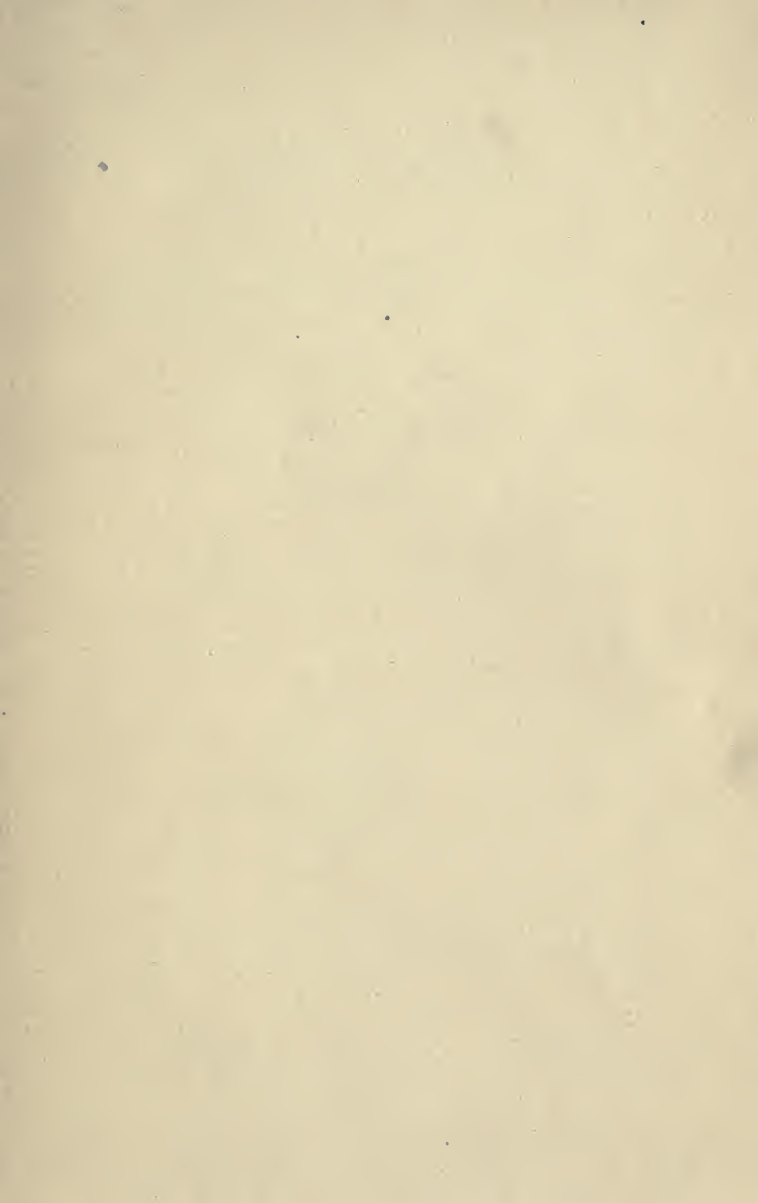
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THOUGHT POWER
DEVELOPED IN PUPILS



BY

JANE BROWNLEE



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GENERAL

P R E F A C E

The widespread exposure of official corruption and dishonesty in business methods seems to give promise of a future demand for a higher type of citizen. The children of to-day must be prepared to meet this demand, and the greater part of such preparation must be the work of the teachers.

No human being is responsible for any other human being: he is responsible for himself alone. He is, however, responsible for the manner in which he meets and discharges his duties toward others.

It is in the hope of quickening or rousing a feeling of self responsibility in the teacher, that this little volume has been written.

J. B.



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THOUGHT POWER DEVELOPED IN PUPILS



HINTS FOR TEACHERS

The following thoughts are intended to be merely suggestive. A copyist is never a success in the highest sense of the word.

Good work in any line bears the stamp of the individuality of the worker.

A teacher who is not alive to himself as spirit, can not hope to appeal to the spirit child. The first step is to attain to a consciousness of his own higher self, to awake to the sacredness of his own individuality; then may he hope for the successful life which is the righteous desire for every human being.

When he has mastered this first step, the thought of another will be to him but a stimulus to his own thought; then will follow his word and his deed, bearing the mark of himself. His work will be strong,

because it is honest; unique, because it is the result of his own thinking, and not the thinking of another.

No two human beings are exactly alike; it is not intended that they should be. Each is the sacred thought of God, and should develop himself to his own highest, never to the highest of another. No man is perfect enough to be a model for another.

He should be an inspiration, not a copy.

When all teachers obey the injunction, "Know thyself", and appreciate the sacredness of their calling, a mighty force for the uplift of humanity will be generated.

"As one who looking from a dusk-whelmed height—

Himself alone—unseen—

Sees on some distant slope a twinkling light
Across the vale between.

And gazing on that small terrestrial star,
Sends through the deepening night
; A kindly thought to those, whoe'er they
are,

' That gather round the light:

So I, a friend unknown and far away,
Across the world's width send
A thought—a handclasp—as a brother may
To you, in thought, my friend.”

—FRANCIS BARINE.

“As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.”

“You never can tell what your thoughts
will do
In bringing you hate or love;
For thoughts are things, and their airy
wings
Are swifter than carrier doves.
They follow the law of the universe,—
Each thing must create its kind;
And they speed o'er the track to bring
you back,
Whatever went out from your mind.”

—ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

“We get back our mete as we measure;
We can not do wrong, and feel right;
Nor can we give pain and gain pleasure,
For justice avenges each slight.”

—ALICE CARY.

THOUGHT ONE

Have you ever asked yourself the question, what is the child ?

He is that upon which you work, and every workman should understand the nature of the materials which he handles.

You should know the child as three-fold—a soul, a spirit “made in the image of the Father”, and having a body and a mind.

When he looks into your eyes with that clear, unwavering gaze of childhood, think to yourself “He, the real child, sees me through ‘the windows of his soul’”. Remember then, that real child is divine.

What influence do you think this thought would have upon you ?

Do you not think it would develop reverence for him ?

Do you not think it would increase your patience in dealing with him ?

This divine child, destined for eternity, dwelling temporarily in the house of flesh, is your sacred charge.

THOUGHT TWO

When once the fact that the child is a divine human being, and not merely flesh and blood, becomes established in your mind, then and not till then shall he receive from you that care and consideration worthy of a divine human being.

When you realize that to you is entrusted, not a flesh and blood child, but a divine child for whose well-being you shall be held to strict account by every law of God, then may the child hope to receive from his teacher that care and consideration which are his by divine right.

The child is then spirit and dwells in a house of flesh; he has a mind, and you are to help him to a true understanding of himself, and how to use his tools, mind and body.

Every child is endowed with conscience, reason and will, which he uses somewhat as follows: A matter connected with his own little affairs presents itself for his consideration, for so he must develop. It appears right or wrong to him; he feels that he should or should not take certain action;

he reasons concerning it; then, by use of his will, he makes his decision to pursue a course. His mind by means of thought conveys its commands to the body, which manifests this decision outwardly.

The result of his reasoning may be disastrous to himself or annoying to others, and is often a great tax upon the patience of his teacher.

But remember how much older you are than he, how many more years of experience are yours, and if possible go over with him the process of reasoning by which he arrived at his decision.

“It takes too much time,” you say, and “I’m too busy.” This may be true, but if you have the desire to help him, the time will come. You will then make him believe in you; he will feel that you are just, and justice is a quality which appeals most strongly to children; he will also feel that you are unselfish—that you desire his good; you have then won him for your friend.

The outward signs of an inward change may be slow in manifesting, but if you are

sincere, the seed is sown and the harvest is sure, though time and place may not be revealed to you. Another may reap where you have sown.

But know, that by the Eternal Law you can never give without getting, and from another and unexpected source may come that which will strengthen and encourage you.

Be faithful. Have high ideals for the little one of whom you are the guardian, and in time he will surely rise toward your thought for him.

But remember nothing great in time or eternity was ever won without patient endeavor.

THOUGHT THREE

Having mastered the truth that the child is spirit, dwelling in a house of flesh, the next step is to realize that it is a young spirit child.

The young soul has all powers, which must be given right conditions for development, even as the little body of flesh needs care to develop health and beauty and a powerful physical life.

12 *Thought Power Developed in Pupils*

Very early the child should be brought into a consciousness of his power to think, and by little lessons should be taught to so develop this vital and subtle force that it may lead to happiness and success. The normal child is full of love, and will manifest this love in kindness, if not opposed. This then is a good starting point for developing thought power.

Those nearest and dearest to him are his parents, and he can be most easily appealed to through his love for them.

Lead him to think and to speak of their tender care for him; the father's daily toil in field, or shop, or office; the mother's care to make the home sweet and happy.

What can he do in return?

Let his love manifest itself in the kind word, the kind and helpful deed. Lead him to think and then to tell what these little acts would be.

Suggest the line of thought, then let the child do his own thinking and speak the results. Do not intrude mature thought upon him. Do not thwart him in his first attempt to enter into a consciousness of

that force which will be his strength if rightly used.

Allow no one to belittle his thought, no matter how foolish the expression may seem; lead him to stronger thinking. If he is ridiculed he will doubt his own thought, and will weakly take the thoughts of others, and so defraud himself of his divine right to manifest his own sacred individuality.

Having considered love and kindness toward his parents, run his thoughts to his next best friend, his good teacher. Lead him to think what she does for him, and how he can show his love for her, and his appreciation of her kindness to him.

Widen his horizon by leading him to think about his brothers and sisters; classmates and dumb animals.

Children should be dealt with from the positive, not the negative side. Speak of the kind thought, the kind word, the kind deed; never suggest the opposite, unkindness. If the subject is forced to a consideration, teach that kindness is stronger than

unkindness and sooner or later will overthrow it.

The busy teacher says, "With a full programme and large enrollment, when can time be found to direct the thought force of the child?"

Five or ten minutes at the opening of the morning session are sufficient.

One thought at a time, firmly and clearly fixed, will bring a rich reward; many thoughts forced into the mind by the teacher will repel, and so retard growth.

A month or six weeks can be profitably spent upon a subject.

Remember, you are to develop the power to think; not to fill the tender young mind with thoughts.

And when you have striven to do your best, what may your hope be?

That you have helped a young soul to grow into a consciousness of its own power, and in the coming years there may be a "Living to the spiritual and not to the flesh."

The influence of such a life can not be

measured, and you have helped to create its influence.

Is the reward worth the striving for ?

THOUGHT FOUR

Having taught the child the value of kindness and how to develop it through his thought, follow by talks on cleanliness.

Unconsciously the child may be led to a knowledge of his three-fold nature, discussing the subject in relation to body, mind and spirit.

First fix his attention upon his body, and by suggestive questions lead him to think and talk.

Refer to the talks on kindness, and ask if a clean child might be considered a kind child in one way and why ? Is the clean child attractive ? Would this be one way to win the love and respect of others ? Does the love of others add to the happiness of the child ? Is it worth the trouble he must take every day of his life if he would be really sweet and clean, and so develop his body in health, strength and beauty ?

Do animals bathe and how ?

If those little creatures care for themselves; what about little boys and girls? This is always a fruitful topic.

You may find it necessary to give very plain and practical directions. But there will be no difficulty in supplying the child with suggestive and helpful knowledge along this line if you yourself are imbued with the sacredness of your own body; if you realize the truth, "Your bodies are the temples of the living God."

Remember, however, we can never give to others with force, what we do not prove our belief in by our living.

Do not hurry the work; only one thought at a time till interest is aroused and lasting impressions have been made.

When the cleanliness of the body has been discussed not to exhaustion, take the mind. Lead the child to think of his mind as the knife with which he cuts his way,—usefully, not cruelly. He will tell the difference between a good knife and a poor one, and can describe exactly the kind he would like to own, and how to keep it in good condition.

Apply this to his mind. It must be kept clean and sharp, and must be used, or it will gather rust of a peculiar kind. Pure thoughts make the mind clear and healthy and strong.

Why should he learn his lessons ?

Why should he ask questions about the things he sees around him ?

Why should he listen when older people are discussing that which is good for him to know.

Lastly, what is the effect of the clean body and the clean mind upon him, the real child, the spirit child living in his little house of flesh ? Does not the little spirit child need the clean house and the sharp knife ? They can only be gained by striving day by day to do one's very best. No person can gain them for another. When you have impressed this, again you have fixed responsibility, and to that extent have you further developed the little one entrusted to your care.

If teacher and pupils love and value cleanliness, they must have a clean, attractive schoolroom. Discuss plans with the

pupils, and whenever practicable, follow their suggestions; this creates and fosters a personal interest. One plan is to have caretakers, two or four at a time, selected in alphabetical order, and whose duty it shall be to make an attractive schoolroom. They should be allowed to use their own taste, and when results show interest and enthusiasm, both teacher and pupils should express appreciation. A little judicious praise is a fine incentive to effort.

This plan gives pleasure, for the normal child loves to help. By means of it you are teaching the child the value of co-operation; you are utilizing energy, that if not directed, might run into channels of mischief; you are developing unselfishness when the child is willing to give his time and labor for that which adds to the comfort and pleasure of others.

You, yourself, will learn much of human nature, and will understand your pupils better by noting how they conduct themselves in this service.

THOUGHT FIVE

“As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.”

The child must be taught that he makes himself by his thinking. The good word and the good deed are born of the good thought. They can come in no other way. What his words and deeds shall be, he must decide by his thinking, and therefore what kind of boy he is depends upon himself.

He must be taught that there are certain things he must do for himself, or they are forever undone.

For example, his mother can prepare the wholesome food which he needs for the growth of his body; she may set it temptingly upon the table, and invite him to eat. She can do no more.

He must take the food from the table, masticate and swallow it. This he may refuse to do if he wishes, but the result is inevitable; in time come sickness and even death to the body.

His teacher-mother prepares the food for his mind. She selects the lessons which she thinks he needs, she gives certain neces-

sary explanations. This is all she can do for him. He may refuse to learn the lessons, and as with the body, in due time he will have a starved mind.

He must do his own thinking; no one can do it for him.

When you have helped him to grasp this, you have helped him to take responsibility, and it is taking responsibility that develops a human being, either child or adult.

The child must do his own thinking; you can not do that for him.

But because he is young and inexperienced, and because you are his teacher, you must help him to direct his thoughts aright.

This responsibility rests upon you.

It may be that the thought in his home, and the thoughts of his companions tend to draw him down. All the more need that his teacher be a strong force, drawing in the opposite direction.

You are his hope.

Do not fail him.

SUGGESTIVE SUBJECTS

Regard for the Rights of Others

Parents.

Brothers and sisters.
Teacher and classmates.
Dumb animals.

Obedience

In the home.
In the school.
To the laws of health.
To God.

Government

Is it necessary? Why?
In the home? Why?
In the school? Why?
Will you uphold government? Why?

Courage

Physical.
Moral.

Nothing great in time or eternity was ever won without patient endeavor.

OPENING EXERCISES

The work of the school, both morning and afternoon, should commence with some general exercises, which may vary in length according to the grade and the character of the exercises. The question arises why have them at the opening of the session and

what is their value. There are reasons why these exercises should be conducted at the beginning of school. The work that is done at this time is important and should have a favorable time. At the beginning of the session the mind is the clearest and most active, and consequently is in the best condition to engage in this work, and more can be accomplished in the short time that is devoted to this feature of the programme. There is, however, another important reason. Children are full of life and activity. When they enter the school-room they are animated, excited, and restless. Their thoughts are on affairs outside, on their games, on the things they are planning, etc. The break from the world without to their lessons within is very marked. They do not possess sufficient will power to hold their attention firmly to the study at hand. They look at their books and pretend to study and still their thoughts wander away. It causes a great loss of mental energy, besides forming habits that tend to undermine the power of the will when pupils are obliged to take up the active work of the

school-room without having some general exercises with which to begin the session.

Here the child is associated with his companions and these exercises draw the minds of all pupils gradually from the outside world to the work of the school-room. They put the pupils in a proper frame of mind to grapple with the problems of the school without loss of power; and when they begin the regular work, their minds are ready for it and their attention can be easily held to the appointed tasks. It is very important to get the minds of the pupils prepared for work and these exercises are valuable for this transition or change that is so necessary.

What shall be taken up in these exercises, is probably the next question. There are many things that are suitable and will be found profitable. They should not be the same every day. To give life and interest there should be variety. The kind of exercises should also vary according to the grade. There might be included in the programme some interesting story told or some selection read by the teacher; memory gems re-

cited; a talk on morals and manners; occasional periods of song; then current topics might find a place, especially in the upper grades; some exercises in sense training will be found profitable for younger children. After the general programme, the work of the day might begin with a short drill in mental arithmetic.

Let us look at this programme a little more in detail. The first of which we speak is an interesting story or selection. What a vast field lies stretched out before the teacher! What an opportunity she has to select material that will correlate with her work and make it interesting and give it life as well as enrich and broaden the child's knowledge! How some pleasing story pertaining to nature will create enthusiasm in that work and a desire to know more about it. An account of some trip the teacher has taken to some historic spot or the relating of some travels imaginary if not real will deepen the pupils' interest in history and geography. These periods become fascinating to the pupils and arouse an activity of mind that is so desirable in the work.

The story time is an important factor in the programme and should be well planned and thought out. It should have a bearing on some of the work and be arranged with that end in view.

This is only one feature of the work, the receptive side. We should not neglect the expression side. More attention should be paid to this. The tendency is to overlook and slight the power of expression. Knowledge is of value in so far as it gives us power, and that lies in our ability to express our ideas. Whenever a story is told or a selection read to the pupils they should be required to reproduce it in some way. It may form a part of the material for the sand table, the modelling, manual training, be expressed in words, or illustrated with pen, pencil or brush. It should also find expression in more than one way. It should be expressed in concrete form as well as in good language. This will give the pupils power. It is one of the principles of the new education and demands that much attention be given to this side of the work.

Memory gems are of much value and are

important in forming character. In each grade several should be learned, varying in length and character according to the ages of the children. This will include poems and choice selections of prose. Those for the lower grades should be shorter and more simple than those for the higher grades. The children may not be able to comprehend the full meaning of the selections at the time they learn them but this will gradually unfold as they grow older. Memory is the strongest in childhood and this is pre-eminently the time for committing things to memory. If they are firmly fixed in the mind in youth they will form a valuable fund upon which the children may draw in after life, as well as giving them many rules for future action. Those learned in the lower grades should be recalled in the upper grades, and here they will come back with new thoughts and additional feelings. This exercise will also assist in fixing them more firmly in the mind.

In these exercises there is an excellent opportunity for lessons on morals and manners. There should be a place for this sub-

ject on the programme, and more attention should be given it than is being done. It is one of the much neglected parts of our school work, and if any teacher doubts it let him take a critical observation of the youth about him. It is time that teachers should take a deeper interest in this subject and place more emphasis upon it. In this work some precepts and rules are necessary as a basis for action. A pupil's right doing should be emphasized by rational principles and laws. He must have a knowledge of morals in order that his actions may be moral. The school should accentuate the virtues which the child ought to possess in the ethical world. He should be instructed in moral ideas and led to exercise them in his conduct. History and literature furnish ideals for him to follow and on which he may exercise his moral judgment. He should have before his mind ideals of the very highest order of excellence, and every effort should be put forth to reach them. A few well chosen mottoes, proverbs, and maxims should be taught. They should be clear and simple, so that they will sink

deeply into the soul and will become a stimulus to action. Appropriate stories and fables will also be found of great value in illustrating or emphasizing a lesson or clinching a point. The work will strengthen character, and this is the great and ultimate end of education.

Songs have a great educational value. While music will find a place on the regular programme, occasionally a song or two during the period of general exercises will add variety and life, cultivate the feelings, and exert a powerful influence upon the pupils. Pupils in the higher grades should have a knowledge of current topics. It will not only add interest to their work but will stimulate and encourage them to read and keep abreast of the times. It will create in them an ambition to know what is going on in the world in which they will soon become an active factor.

There is a good opportunity for some exercises in sense training. This is a subject of much value as it forms the basis of all the higher intellectual operations. It is a theme in itself as well as some of the other

topics and can not be fully discussed in this connection. It has been greatly neglected but is coming to be recognized more and more in our work and the time is not far distant when it will form a part of the curriculum. Let the sense training follow some general exercise. This will bring the pupil's mind nearer to the regular work and he will then be ready for some training of this character. This will serve as a means of bringing the mind still closer, sharpening the faculties and giving the pupil a better power of controlling his attention, as well as developing the senses. This is absolutely necessary if he is to become an aggressive warrior in the great battle of life, conquering the stern realities and sharp competition that inevitably await him. He must have clear and definite mental images if he is to fully understand and enjoy the beauties hidden in literature, and these he can obtain only by having his senses well trained.

After the general exercises in the morning a short drill in intellectual arithmetic is of great value. The problems should be sim-

ple and include the principles found in the daily lessons. The minds of the pupils need to be active and vigorous. The exercises have gradually brought them to a proper condition for this work, and this is the time most appropriate for it. It is a good exercise in developing the power of the will to hold the attention firmly to the work at hand. It cultivates a habit of quick and accurate thinking; trains the reasoning faculty; arouses an activity of mind and sharpens the intellect for the work that is to follow. We need a great deal of this kind of work that requires hard, genuine thinking. We must not mistake the spirit of the age and think that we must make things easy for the pupil or discover some royal road by which he may obtain knowledge without self-exertion. We must let him work and work hard, but assist him by making his work interesting.

If the work is well planned and correlated, exercises of this character will be found of much practical value in our modern system of education.



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