

T H E S I S.

Subject, The Moral Value of the Kindergarten.

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The famous work begun among the Athenians so long ago did not end with them but is still the leading motive of all good teachers.

We are ever trying to discover the man in every human being and have him choose and gain the highest ideals.

Past ages with all their instruction have not accomplished this, neither can the knowledge of the present unless we make it a part of ourselves.

The children of to-day are to be the men of the next generation, so that we may truly say, that to a great extent the morality of the future is an embryo in the Kindergarten of to-day.

The watch words of the Kindergarten as given by Froebel himself are "religion, industry, and temperance." He says "religion without industry is liable to be lost in empty dreams. Industry without religion degrades man into a beast of burden."

The ideals presented by the poet, the stories of

good deeds drawn from history, furnish children with a desire for the true, beautiful, and good.

Let us begin with the child and make the ladder which the Kindergarten raises from earth toward heaven.

On the very first round of the ladder right down with the child, we might put the hand work. This gives the child his disposition of industry and his creations, which provide for him the beautiful.

The child who is busy creating something useful or beautiful in which it must put head, heart, and hand forms a love of work and has no time to be idle nor do evil.

Among the criminals whom we find in the prisons of our country are people from educated families but very rarely are persons who have learned a useful trade.

So that we find occupation the opposite for evil. The hands are directed to some chosen end by

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he will, hence the moral value.

On the next round put the games, which give an opportunity to practice self-control and helpfulness. These fix impressions which could be fixed in no other way in the minds of young children. These are the actual experience of the child.

Through play every thing can be made real and any truth that you wish impressed. Does it not seem the most rational thing in the world that a child should learn tenderness and therefore be less cruel to butterflies by being allowed to play that he is a caterpillar going to sleep in his little cocoon and turning into a beautiful butterfly?

Children will find that unselfishness and gentleness always bring peace and happiness. The teacher can choose between the games and the children to play and thus guide and protect the timid one and repress the bold.

if all children were allowed to play the trade games they would soon begin to think that they were not all but only a part of our great world, and would respect and honor labor.

The games which call for sub-ordination of self give daily practice for this virtue.

The strong must help the weak, and each must help to get the perfect play are some of the lessons to be learned.

No more but in the Kindergarten do we see the means provided by which the aesthetic faculty may be trained and developed to a keen perception of beauty in form, color, and sound as well as in character and life.

Stories, the third round of our ladder, should be used as a means of education hence we should be careful in the selection, for if the stories of childhood are only a means for indulging the emotions and put out of the sphere of education altogether,

the line of stories will not lead us to the Poetry of Milton in after life, but to the sensational novel.

Stories are the child's first introduction into the grand world of the ideal in character and life.

The first and highest use of stories is to enable the child to form a pure and noble idea of what man may do and be.

A second use of stories is in the illustrations they supply to the children of the laws governing life.

A third use is the sense they give a child of a world beyond his own and thus next to companionship they serve to destroy that egotism which looks on self as the center of all things.

They bring the power of example to bear upon children and also develop their sympathy. Through interest all things are won and the incentive to morality given a child's mind

by the judicious telling of stories is incalculable. In all story telling the Kindergarten should be able to embody a moral suggestion in an attractive manner to children so that they may be able to grasp and hold it easily.

Right along with the requirements of a good Kindergarten goes the fourth round of our ladder, the music. It is as natural for a child to sing as talk. He has become accustomed to the nursery songs before he entered the Kindergarten. Why not just continue this pleasure and open every day with singing? It may be that the first ideas of God are developed through these songs.

If we are dealing with a shy child his social nature develops, he joins in with the others and helps in the morning concert.

Finally he may ask to sing a favorite song

alone. Not a disturbing sound is heard until he has finished when his class mates show by their sweet smiles that they approve of his work.

One very rarely finds a child with "no music in his soul" so why not develop his love for the best music, which is just as easy to do, rather than his taste for the poor.

Miss Coulson suggests a means of natural expression to children through her finger plays. Quiet in the Kindergarten is greatly due to the effect of these songs as the fingers are left occupied at the close. If a cradle has been made and baby rocked to, but it may have a nice nap till work is ready.

Every period of time in a Kindergarten is interesting, every period is important but surely the period devoted to the Morning Talk has the highest claims to our attention. This should be the time for happy greetings.

not only our little friends but the clouds, flowers,
sunshine or what ever we may be going to
sing about.

During this talk with the children we may
and do give the key note for the whole day.
This is one of the very best places to begin
our science teaching.

The thought of the Morning Talk whatever it
may be should if possible be followed out
in the occupations, games, and gift work.
But the Morning Talk is not only a time
for happy greetings, finger plays, and songs
but the highest function of it is the presenta-
tion of the ideal in such a way as to endear
it to the children and lead them to adopt and
cherish it.

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