

T H E S I S.

Subject, How a Teacher May Get at the Front and
Keep There.

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Followers of every profession set up high ideals which through life they aim to reach. The highest ideal a teacher may have is that of reaching and keeping a place in the front ranks of the great army of teachers. We cannot just step into a place so desirable nor is it given to us by chance; but only by working long and faithfully can we arrive at this most advantageous position. And then we must continue our work in order to maintain our position.

We have had many good and successful teachers in the past and in no better way can we profit by their example than by studying their lives and principles so that we can follow their good points and avoid their errors. We will find that quite a number of these teachers, Pestalozzi especially, never thought of self until their health being completely broken down they were forced to take a rest. But this is going to extremes for without good health we can not

be successful teachers. But aside from the question of health we should follow the example of our successful predecessors and live and think only with and for our pupils. It is said of Pestalozzi that at Yverdon he became so engrossed with his pupils, both eating and sleeping with them, as to cause them to forget that they had any other home. Whilst it is impracticable for us as teachers to live with our pupils as Pestalozzi and others did yet we can visit our pupils frequently at their homes and thus become acquainted with their peculiarities. And we can become acquainted with the parents and show them the necessity of their helping us in the education of their children. If the parents will help their children at home and if we do our part at school we are in a sense doing as Pestalozzi did.

The teacher must not think of her pupils as so many blank tablets upon which may

be impressed whatever she in her caprice deems fit. Instead they are living souls - personalities - in which are lodged great possibilities which may become even greater realities if properly and wisely cared for by the teacher. These children can not be fed in the same manner from the fountain of knowledge, but as each one has his own physiological and psychological temperament so each must have his own manner of treatment.

It has often been truthfully said that "teachers are born, not made." It is only the natural teacher who has tact enough to draw her timid pupils out and give them to see that the schoolroom is not a place of terror but rather a second home to them. Many of the children who come to us at school come from homes where kindness, culture, and refinement are unknown. How needful to such children is a home like school.

Let us make our schoolroom attractive and insist that the children help us keep it so by having clean shoes, clean hands, and clean faces. If we succeed in making our schoolroom attractive and be attractive ourselves the children will be eager to come to school. But after we get them there we must keep them there, this we can do by following the principle of Comenius which says "Learning should be made agreeable."

Teachers should always have something interesting and profitable to communicate to their classes. We want the best things we can get for our pupils for as someone has said "The best things that were ever written, are almost good enough for children."

We have various excuses for not doing our work well: such as the following. bad health, not enough money, too much work, and so forth. We should be ashamed in this day and generation to make the first excuse. If we cannot

build ourselves up physically we should not attempt to teach. The second is still a weaker excuse for if we look at this important work as being measured by gold we will never be successful teachers. As Dr. Hoss says "It is the extra work we do that counts." And as for the third excuse if we have too much work to do we should drop part of it, for it is better to do a few things well than many things not so well.

We should, before beginning our work of teaching, study critically the lives and principles of such teachers as Pestalozzi, Froebel, Comenius, Horace Mann and others. Then we should aim to reach or even surpass them in this great work. And remember that only by hard work can success be attained for "Heights by great men reached and kept, Were not attained by sudden flight But they while their companions slept Were toiling upwards in the night."

Reference Books.

The lives of Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Comenius, as given by Painter, Quirk, and the Encyclopedia. Also Pestalozzi's "Remond and Gertrude" and Rousseau's "Emile".

Thoughts taken from Prof. Jackman and Dr. W. C. Murray.