

## T H E S I S .

Subject, Johan F. Herbart

Name, Anna M. Orr

Johan F. Herbart was born May 4, 1776, at Oldenburg and died at Gottingen in 1841. During his life-time there were many political revolutions and also great systems of thought were developed. The greater part of Herbart's work was done in the class-room, where he was engaged in instructing persons who were to become great leaders of thought in the future.

In the year 1809, Herbart went to Konigsberg to occupy the chair which had been vacated by Krug. During the same year, his father died but he had lived long enough to see his son reach a position of honor and fame. He not only lectured on philosophy, but also took charge of the department of pedagogics. He became acquainted with William von Humboldt, the commissioner of education for Prussia.

and he made Herbart a member of the school commission which had charge of the interest of higher education.

The main thing in Herbart's educational work was the formation of character in its essential elements. He said: "it was the task of education to create in the soul an abundance of demands, in such a way that they may help contribute to the needs of practical life."

The subject of pedagogics claimed his attention and interest very early in life. He reduced the subject of education to a science. The three things which he made prominent in his science of education are: its aim, its plan, and the method of instruction.

His aim of education was to form a strong, moral character.

The plan treats of the arrangement and selection of the material.

The third deals with the systematic, the distinct, and the exact treatment of the subjects which are used in instruction.

In order that the child may absorb the material presented to it, he must give attention. There are two kinds of attention voluntary and involuntary.

Voluntary attention is brought about through the effort of the will.

Involuntary attention is that in which the effort of the will is not required. It is divided into primitive and apperceiving attention. Primitive attention is that which arises through our own individual power.

Apperceiving is that which is assisted or re-inforced through the connection there is between the representations

already present.

In order that the mind may take or apprehend the representations, it must have the powers of absorption and reflection.

Absorption is the special care that we give to a subject so that we may apprehend it fully.

There are four steps or stages in instruction; clearness, association, system, and method.

That the pupil may understand the subject clearly the teacher should present it in a very simple manner.

Association is not complete if the imagination is not brought into use. The best method for association is conversation which gives the pupil an opportunity to assimilate what is learned.

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System is that step in which each part of what is learned is properly related. The essential condition of system is clearness.

Absorption should proceed reflection, but they must always be kept together. We should give equal prominence to both absorption and reflection, if we wish to keep the mind well balanced.

To secure good government we must have love and authority. Love depends on the relation of the feelings and also upon habit. In order to obtain love the teacher must enter into the feelings of the pupil, or the pupil should in some manner approach the feelings of the teacher. Government is the keeping of the outward order by means of authority. Training is moral education as it

works upon the mind. The watchful attention of the teacher is a means to prevent disorder. The obedience which follows as the result of the teacher's authority is government, but the obedience which follows as the result of thought upon her command is training.

There is no other system of pedagogics that can approach Herbart in scientific completeness. He was the first great philosopher that devoted his main attention to pedagogics, and whose system stands related to it.

Herbart was a personal friend of Pestalozzi, but was never a disciple. Herbart and Pestalozzi both accept the doctrine of Aristotle: that it is the principal business of education to

supplement what nature and association with others do for the child.

Herbart stands in close relation to the great leaders of pedagogical thought both ancient and modern. With Socrates he believes that the building of moral character is the end of education, with Plato he believes that intellectual culture is the necessary means to that end, and with Aristotle he regards education as a supplement to the experience which is derived from nature and the mingling with others in society.

There is nothing that can be welcomed as much by the friends of public education as a system of school training that will develop the moral character, without coming in contact with any certain religious doctrines. This is



VIIII.

the kind of a system that Herbart  
and his followers have been trying  
to give to the educational world.

Bibliography.  
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Pages 12-106

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