

Women as Primary Teachers.

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The various positions that are open to woman makes it a difficult problem for her to choose that place for which she is most fitted. Tho she is certain to succeed in any work which she may take up, yet it must be admitted that there are certain places for her in which she can achieve for greater success, and in which she is needed more than others, one of the most important of these places being that of primary teaching.

This position was at first occupied only by man but as primary schools increased in number and efficiency, and woman, being allowed to enter this line of work, showed her superior ability to man, she has been gradually given a preference and today holds almost entire control of this department of education.

and why has woman been so successful in this line of work? Because, while by the law of the state the position is open to both sex by the law of nature it is exclusive to woman woman being the natural educator of

the child, born with a heart, love, sympathy and patience to produce that which is best and highest in the child.

Thus has the value of women as primary teachers been brought before a few of the leading educators of the time, but even today the greatest majority of people does not realize the great problem left in the hands of the primary teachers, nor the ability with which they perform their tasks.

These teachers deal with the child during the first seven, eight or even more years of school life. This is the period of character building, the laying of a foundation, in the child's life, that will be a great factor in shaping the future destiny of the universe, the period when the most important of life's lessons should be taught, the formation of right habits for right living.

The work, tho' looked upon by many as seemingly unimportant, is one of the noblest lines of work that one can enter, and many young women do we find spending days, months and years in this great field of work, shaping the lives of the children and through them the life of a nation.

To the majority of people it seems but a small task to manage a class of young pupils, but if they would study the subject more closely or in some way come in closer contact with the teacher and the taught, they could better realize the trials to be borne and the obstacles to be overcome in a school room.

Imagine a class of twenty-five, thirty or even more young pupils, too young to be allowed self control and thus every act requiring the closest attention of the teacher. Here patience and love is necessary for the complete working of the organization that teacher and pupil may receive that which is most elevating to mind and soul, and little or nothing can be accomplished, along this line, without the heartfelt sympathy of teacher for pupil.

The different temperaments, home surroundings and environments of the pupils, makes the problem of management a difficult one. For every case with which the teacher comes in contact, is a special one and requires special treatment.

Those pupils, whose home surroundings are not the best or most cheerful, need the constant love and sympathy of the teacher that she may keep their hearts alive to the good.

and beautiful and start them on the road that leads to the highest degree of manhood and womanhood.

again we find those who come from homes of luxury and plenty, yet for this very fact they are led into the loud and vicious paths of life. Often times the teacher may have a tendency to feel at variance with this class of boys and girls, yet are they not to be pitied even as much as those whose home surroundings are not so good. Here again the patient loving care of the teacher is all that will save them from the ruin that is mapped out for them, and who can bestow this love, who can give this heart-felt sympathy that is so essential to primary teaching, and again we must say that by nature this problem has been trusted in the hands of woman, and she alone, and true woman at that, is the only safe guard to be placed before this class of children and where she fails there is little hope, if any, of a successor who can take up this work and carry it on to the goal that has been mapped out.

now let us look at another phase of this great work, for there is another and far sadder phase than that already considered.

Think of the many thousands of women who go into the slums of large cities, where public schools cannot reach the poor and degraded, and there, amidst turmoil and confusion, start, at their own expense, schools for this class that they may receive the benefits of education.

many of these noble women come from homes of luxury, where want and woe are not known, and not one of them is there but leaves a home that is far above the place to which she goes.

Think of those who go into the slums, and there, with all the love and sympathy that human heart can show, devote their whole lives to this one small part of a great problem; they go into these places for a purpose and thus put their whole energy into the work, trying harder to make men and women of this class of children than many of the childrens own parents.

we see in these schools pupils of all grades and classes, many of whom perhaps, have never heard the word home, and others that are not bettered by their home surroundings. They come to these schools hardly knowing what it means to be civilized and here they are to receive their first lessons that will tend to make of them men and women of a nation.

What a heart what a soul a woman must have to enter a place like this. What a store of love to conquer the passions of those half civilized youths and be to them such a tender guide. What patience to meet children of every nationality and every degree of morality and yet to move them by one common bond - that of love - Laboring early and late, visiting the homes of those who have such and finding or making homes for those who have not, never tiring of the daily tasks that confront her, but, being filled with the blessing of God carrying out what she deems to be his commands, at the sacrifice of all most near and dear to her.

can think to much praise heaped upon the heads of ~~these~~ noble young women, that leave love, friends and all that they may serve their country, and save it from the iron bands of immorality and ignorance?

Such is the work of primary teachers and though some may have more difficulties to overcome than others, yet their work, in general, is the same.

What heroic deeds they perform though no one looks upon their work in this light. They spend days, months and years in fighting a battle that has no end and whose victory cannot be overestimated. They belong to an army engaged in the severest of battles every day and go marching on to victory without a word of praise to cheer them on their way, and while these young women lay their lives down for the cause of their country, no one feels at all grateful to them, or has a word of praise for they who have labored so unceasingly, not for glory or for fame but for the uplifting of humanity.

How many young women are there who, entering this line of work, have given their every thought to the tasks they have to perform until over come by exhaustion they must drop out of this line, perhaps many of them wounded for life by the wear and tear of school duties, and how few of these young women, fighting the worlds greatest battles, receive even a word of praise for the victories they are gaining, conquering the evil tendencies that are lurking in the child's heart and stamping in their stead higher aspirations and longings for nobler and better living, and yet we can realize only a small part of the great work that they are accomplishing.

To many it may seem but a small task to be performed, and this by women only because they are fit for nothing else. But think for one moment of the great effect that primary teaching has upon a nation, the entire destiny of a nation being shaped by the character formed while yet the pupil is under the primary teacher.

Think of the numberless boys and girls who do not receive the home training they

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should and if this part of their education was omitted, would develop into worthless and degrading men and women, think of the sorrows that would surround the home, of the destiny of a nation in the hands of such a crowd, and what a degenerated mass humanity would become if left to take its own course. The society, schools and every social organization would become degraded if noble characters were not formed in childhood.

Look at the great class of young children that must be educated in all that will lead to perfect manhood and womanhood, restricted to certain rules that they may form worthy habits, that will be the great factor in the uplifting of the following generations - and this all this is left in the hands of the primary teacher.

How much must the thought and care of the true teacher be, the teacher who realizes that the problem of a nation is left for her to solve, if not in whole, at least in part and that being the guiding of the young into the right paths of living and doing.

all this the primary teacher assumes without once faltering in her steps, but puts her shoulder to the great wheel, that moves the universe, and starts it on the right path for another revolution, and when she has accomplished this and turned the wheel till her shoulder no longer touches, she drops back overcome by the heavy burdens that she saw fit to bear, and without a thought a look for her, those who now take up the work, after the path has been cleared, carry it to the end and then glory in themselves to think what a deed they have performed, what men and women they have given to their country, and the world bows down to them while she, who is the foundation of all, passes thru life without a word of cheer for the noble work that it has been her lot to perform.

Thus woman with her never tiring love and patience makes of a country what it is today, she, with a heart and soul not to be equalled shapes the future destiny of a nation, and while the world does not look upon it as such, it must be admitted that there is no nobler or grander work to be performed and that the greatest problem of the universe is left in the hands of the primary teachers.