

The Teacher out of School.

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Many teachers appear to think that the time spent in the class room is all that is necessary to be given for the salary received. If this is all that any teacher intends to perform, the sooner he changes his condition, the better for him and the school. Any person who enters the schoolroom should be willing and desirous to fit himself for the work to be done or not enter it at all. He must make adequate daily preparation. There is always enough to annoy a teacher in the daily routine without his having to puzzle over the subject matter to be taught. A teacher who prepares his work has a confidence in himself that inspires confidence in the scholars. Let a teacher show that he is bothered or worried and his cause is very much hindered.

Many teachers are obliged to study because they took up the work of teaching without being properly prepared. They were satisfied to make merely a pass mark at the Provincial examinations, and, consequently, if they expect to succeed at all, a great deal of studying must be done at home. This work unduly tires the teacher, and, perhaps, leads to a nervous break-down. Thorough preparation should be made before taking up the work of teaching. After that the chief concern will be about the manner of presenting the subjects. He can then find time for the other duties of a school teacher, one of which is to do a certain amount of reading on subjects not specially connected with his daily program.

Unless the teacher reads widely, he is not competent to direct the scholars to the best articles in literature, in poetry, prose, or fiction. Since there is so much that is far from uplifting in fiction the teacher should be able to direct the scholars to the works of really great merit, such as those of Scott and Dickens. He should be prepared to select the proper books for a school library. He should read the latest scientific articles, and should place them within the reach of all scholars capable of understanding them. Disregarding the good effect on the scholars of extensive reading on the part of the teacher, he himself will derive immense benefit, gaining greater freedom and power in every social or public gathering.

The teacher should find time to visit the homes of the people in the community. He can thus get a good idea of the needs of the children, of the conditions of their home life. Thus his sympathies will be enkindled toward some children whom he could not like nor understand previously. The scholars will feel that the teacher is interested in their welfare, and a better feeling is sure to be established. He can often obtain the sympathy and co-operation of parents who hitherto had opposed his work in the section.

Every country community should have some kind of an organization for mutual improvement. The teacher should encourage and assist any such movement, and where no such organization exists, he should use his influence to bring it about. Let him encourage the boys and the girls to take some part in the debates and the readings, to discuss current events, and to understand how to preside over public assemblies. Many a bookworm, who can make a grand showing at the examinations, is of little use when appearing before an audience, and this diffidence is often due to lack

of training. At such gatherings as I have mentioned many a youth has found himself, realized his powers, and proceeded to develop them.

It is necessary for every teacher to spend some time in recreation. It is a great mistake to apply oneself so closely to the work that nerves are wrecked and health permanently impaired. The teacher should engage in the sports of the boys, or in some out-of-door games. He needs to forget for a short time, at least, the worries and difficulties in connection with his daily work. Such recreation is like oil applied to machinery or like the farmer stopping to sharpen his dull tool. It will pay because of the better work that can be done.

Many teachers burden themselves with too much work out of school hours. Not satisfied with the money they get from teaching, they try to supplement it in some way by working after hours. Now the work of the school teacher is always taxing enough on his powers without additional work. If he uses up his nervous energy in other business, he is not in a position to do justice to his school. It is true that the teacher often draws scarcely a living wage, but it is always true that the conscientious, earnest teacher is bound to rise. In this profession, as in other professions, "there is always room at the top."

If a teacher's example does not harmonize with his precepts, those precepts can be of little use. For example, every teacher is required to teach that the use of tobacco and intoxicating liquors is injurious to health. Of what use are such teachings on a scholar who afterwards meets his teacher with a cigar in his mouth, or with the smell of whiskey on his breath?

The teacher who would lead his scholars to be courteous must be courteous himself. Courtesy is one of the most important qualifications for a teacher or for any one else. No teacher is fit for his position who will allow the trials of the school room to rob him of his politeness. He will gain nothing by a boisterous, rude manner. If he cannot be a gentleman and teach school he had better leave the profession. The best way to acquire politeness for the schoolroom is to invariably practise it out of the schoolroom. There can be no doubt that the greatest gentleman that ever walked the earth was the Saviour of men, and that the teacher who is trying to live according to the principles that He laid down will be the nearest to a true gentleman.

The teacher must not be unmindful of his personal appearance. Neatness is an important qualification. It is not essential that he should wear very expensive clothing and especially should he be careful not to dress after the manner of the dude. He should impress upon the children the fact that their prospects for a successful career will be greatly enhanced if they are careful of their personal appearance.

The teacher when out of school and mingling with the boys should watch their conversation, and always show his displeasure over any obscene or improper language.

I know of a teacher in a western town who was naturally a good instructor, but he was not a success. Parents complained because he spent so much time in the pool room and in gambling, and that he was addicted to the use of tobacco and liquor. They found that their children were contracting the same habits, and were holding the teacher up as their example.

There are many good people who can see no harm in dancing