

**HOW GERTRUDE TEACHES HER
CHILDREN; AN ATTEMPT TO HELP
MOTHERS TO TEACH THEIR OWN
CHILDREN; AND AN ACCOUNT
OF THE METHOD**

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How Gertrude Teaches Her Children; An Attempt to Help Mothers to Teach Their Own Children; And an Account of the Method by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi

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JOHANN HEINRICH PESTALOZZI

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An Attempt to Help Mothers to Teach their own Children

AND

AN ACCOUNT OF THE METHOD

A Report to the Society of the Friends of Education, Burgdorf

BY

JOHANN HEINRICH PESTALOZZI

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AND EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,

BY

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CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| EDITOR'S PREFACE | vii |
| INTRODUCTION | xiii |
| PREFACE | 1 |
| LETTER I. | 9 |
| LETTER II. | 42 |
| LETTER III. | 61 |
| LETTER IV. | 72 |
| LETTER V. | 80 |
| LETTER VI. | 88 |
| LETTER VII. | 90 |
| LETTER VIII. | 132 |
| LETTER IX. | 139 |
| LETTER X. | 144 |
| LETTER XI. | 163 |
| LETTER XII. | 170 |
| LETTER XIII. | 181 |
| LETTER XIV. | 190 |
| APPENDIX :— | |
| AN ACCOUNT OF THE METHOD. A REPORT. | 199 |
| NOTES TO PREFACE AND LETTERS | 212 |
| SUPPLEMENTS AND NOTE TO THE METHOD | 248 |
| INDEX | 252 |



EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE METHOD in time and thought precedes *How Gertrude Teaches*. It may be read after Letter I., for in this letter Pestalozzi gives the history and circumstances which led him to those principles he first definitely stated in *The Method*. The *First Letter from Stanz* also belongs to this period. It will be found in De Guimps' *Life* and in Quick's *Essays on Educational Reformers*. These works form a complete group, and are his most important educational works. They are undoubtedly his own; of later works this cannot be said until we come to the *Swan's Song* and *My Experiences*.

The portions of *How Gertrude Teaches* in Biber's *Life of Pestalozzi* are all that have been translated. Its peculiar terms, such as "Anschauung," may partly account for this neglect. These terms are difficult, for apparently we do not grasp Pestalozzi's thought. We neither read nor follow him. If we walk in his ways, we may see what he saw; if we repeat his experiments, we may in some measure share his thought. Doing leads to knowing. He has been blamed for not defining his terms. He gives instead the history of his conception, the circumstances which led to it, its development, and his schemes founded on it. "There

are two ways of instructing," he said; "either we go from words to things, or from things to words. Mine is the second method." His meaning may become clearer if the reader will substitute "Anschauung" for "sense impression" and for all other equivalents throughout the work. It has, and can have, no equivalent in English. We may partly learn its meaning, as we have learned that of some other words, from its use. If definitions are desired, the most helpful will be found at the beginning of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Kant's method is to begin with definitions.

We have tried to translate this work literally, without paraphrase and without omissions: no difficult passage has been left out. Much might be improved. The more we learn from him the more evident this is. Any help which will make his thought still clearer will be gladly and thankfully received.

For my part, I heartily wish it had been in abler hands, but the work seems to me as much needed here and now as ever. This is in part my apology for rushing in where more competent beings have feared to tread. It has not been done without much help, and in recording my obligations for this other circumstances will intrude.

To one, first and foremost, my gratitude is due. Of him I have known nothing for more than forty years. Between 1845-1850 the transition from the old school of our forefathers—very similar to that of Samuel Dysli, of Burgdorf—to the new school of trained teachers took place in our retired parish. The old dame and the severe schoolmaster passed away, and among the new teachers came one from Bristol—Mr.