

A True Teacher

BY JOHN LOCKE

In every business, profession, or vocation of any kind success is always desired, and is the object which men earnestly strive for. In an autobiographical sketch of a great violinist among other statements this comment was noticed, "My teacher was a profoundly great man. He taught me the greatest thing of all—to teach myself. The true teacher, the genius, will teach you to teach yourself. For it is only what you upturn thru your own efforts, what you discover after grim and long pondering, that really benefits you." This man was a musician, far removed from the hustle and grind of everyday life, but he has expressed a truth that applies in business, and life is a business, as much as it does in art.

It is what we teach ourselves that enables us to score a success that is out of the ordinary. Take for example the inventors. No one showed James Watt the way to improve the crude Newcomer steam engine and make it an economical, powerful, and thoroly practical invention. No one taught Morse how to construct a telegraph instrument or told Bell how to make it possible to talk across a continent. The Wrights had no instructor in the art of flying heavier-than-air machines, and Edison had no precepts for making an electric light or graphophone.

Of course, as young men these inventors looked to others for instruction. Years of careful apprenticeship were necessary for mastering the technicalities of their craft. Yet if they had never gone farther than the limits of their instructor's knowledge, we would today have no steam engine, no telegraph, no telephone, no aeroplane, no mazda lamp and no phonograph. Taking the knowledge gained from others and from study these men were able to teach themselves, and upturn, thru their own efforts after years of grim pondering, the inventions which have added so much to our safety, prosperity, and happiness.

The point that we wish to express is this: Any man can take merely what others give him thru teaching, and with that knowledge earn a fair living. There will always be a demand for men and wom-

en to carry on the routine work of the world. But the man who aspires to rise above routine to outstanding success—to fame,—must be prepared to do two things. He must master the technical knowledge of his business or profession—that mass of information that has been gathered and tabulated by others. Then, with this as a background he must teach himself, until by "long pondering" over problems and opportunities in his chosen field, he can effectively express and execute his own ideas. This is what the great artists and musicians have done. That is what the captains of industry have done.

All our great institutions and industries, known thruout the world for their marvelous efficiency of productiveness and organization, the Woolworth chain of low priced stores, the Carnegie steel mills, the Bell telephone system, the Rockefeller oil refining and distributing system, the Akron rubber factories, the Ford automobile plant, were created by men who taught themselves how to combine natural resources and human activities in new and profitable ways. These men got but little of their success directly out of books. They were not all even College men. It is doubtful whether they were born geniuses. Their successes can not be summed up in any one sentence, but perhaps this would come close to expressing the secret: they taught themselves.

It is therefore up to us who would be successful in any line of activity, not only to follow the torch of learning held by others, but to get down and dig; to discover things for our own satisfaction; To Teach Ourselves.

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Student.—"Hey, I can't take this suit this way. There aren't any pockets in it."

Tailor.—"I know, but I thought from the length of time you'd owed me for the last one that you never had anything to put in them."

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