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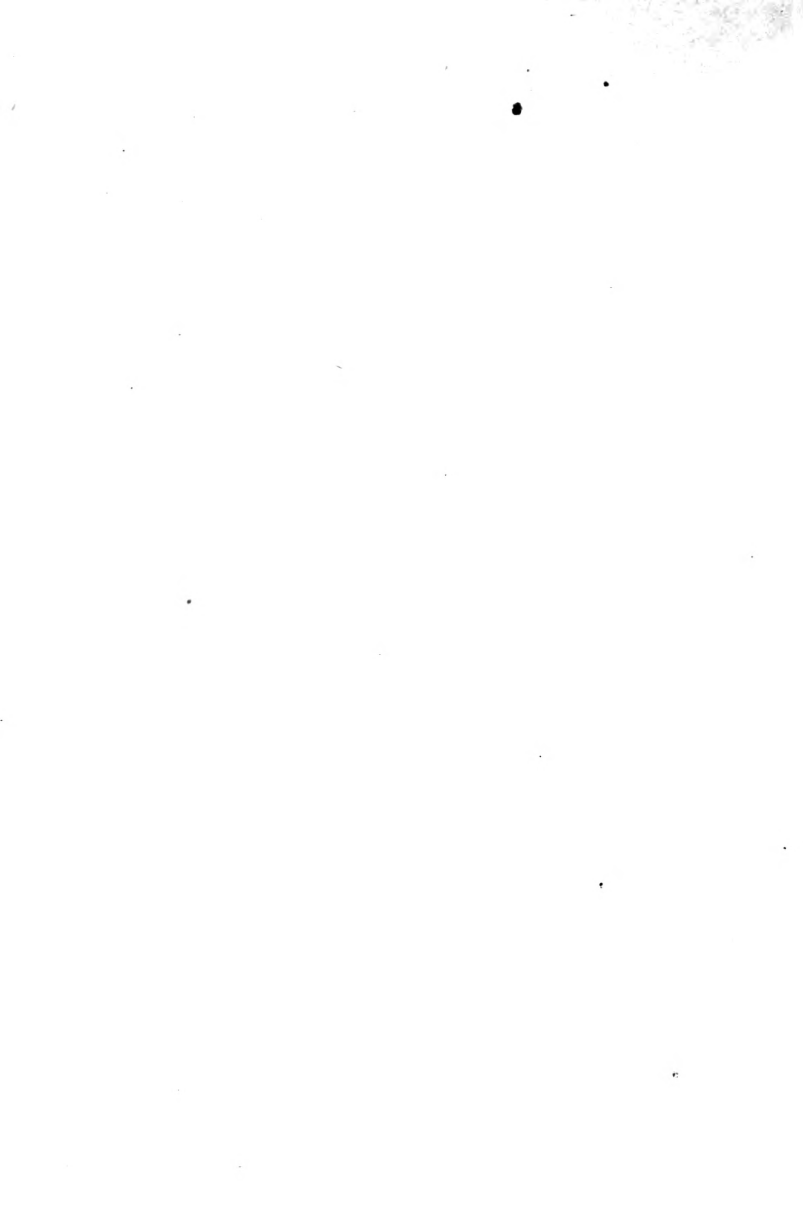
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FRÖBEL'S
SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.



THE
KINDER-GARTEN:
Principles of Fröbel's System

AND THEIR BEARING ON

THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN

ALSO

REMARKS ON THE
HIGHER EDUCATION OF WOMEN

BY

EMILY SHIRREFF,

"
AUTHOR OF "INTELLECTUAL EDUCATION OF WOMEN."



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PREFACE

THE short papers here given to the public were originally published in the "Women's Education Journal" in two distinct series, which are now reprinted together, because they bear ultimately upon the same important subject—the duty laid upon women to fit themselves to be the educators of the race. It were vain to lay down the Kinder-garten System, if women are not ready to practice it; the philosophy of Fröbel must remain a dead letter as regards all practical influence on society, if women are not capable of understanding and acting upon its principles. The Kinder-garten System presents itself, therefore, to those who are anxious to forward the education of women under an aspect of twofold importance—that which it ostensibly claims as a means of developing childish faculty, and that which it indirectly possesses by its imperative claim on the exercise of the highest faculties in women. Family life, few will deny, is the centre of national welfare; and Nature herself has placed women as the central power of family life. Any wide, moral, and intellectual reform must then begin here. We touch the surface only by all educational labour that leaves out of sight the asso-

ciations of home, and these are moulded by women. We touch one side of human nature only, and that which least effects the will, and therefore least concerns action, when we stimulate the intellect, and make no appeal to the heart or the imagination; and this wide region, too much neglected by educators, is that wherein women exercise their most powerful sway. The latter will be one-sided also, and therefore more or less fraught with danger, till moral, intellectual, and æsthetic culture, proceeding hand in hand, have restored the due balance in the feminine mind. Harmonious development is what the welfare of society as of the individual demands, but society cannot attain this advantage until the effects of the long neglect of women's mental capacity has been recognised and remedied.

The more direct importance of the Kinder-garten as training young children, is better appreciated than its influence over the education of women; yet even this is very imperfectly recognised, it is too generally an ignorant and half mistaken view that is taken of its value. It is very commonly considered as a system of mere childish amusements, or means of keeping troublesome little hands and feet quiet; or, at best, as a way of teaching something, before the children are old enough to learn to read. Its intrinsic value as the most philosophical system of real education, ~~that~~ is, of drawing out the faculties of the child, of following

step by step Nature's own order of development, and step by step also cultivating the use of all the instruments by which knowledge shall hereafter be gained, and active life be directed—this, the great power of Fröbel's method, is as yet apprehended by few in England; and it is for this reason that in the following papers I have sought to dwell more on principles than on practice. I am well aware that of the many imperfections of this little book, the most imperfect part is that relating to the various games and exercises. It is so impossible to make this really good without illustrations, that I have attempted no more than what was necessary to make principles intelligible.

Next to my desire to bring out the theory of Fröbel's method, has been that of showing how this early training can be carried on gradually to the ordinary book learning of later schools, and what influence it will have on the pupil's aptitude for the latter. Especially would I dwell upon the fact of the valuable amount of school time saved by the early training of the pupil's faculties in the right direction, the difference it must make to come to work with working habits ready formed, with senses and hands trained to accuracy and delicacy; instead of coming, as children usually do, with some small scraps of book learning acquired by rote, but without the least idea of exercising their own intelligence. What is required is to rouse mothers to the importance of giving this preparation, and gradu-

ally to urge schools to exact it. Teachers will probably not be slow to do so when once they have recognised the assistance thus given to their own labour. The commonest complaint from all schools is of the state of unfitness in which the children are sent to them. One of the most constant arguments used in favour of better education for women has been the schoolmaster's argument, that if mothers could educate their children before school-time, the work of school would be very different from what it is.

The additions made to the sections on Higher Education for Women are considerable, because the extremely narrow limits of the Journal at the time they were first written had made brevity a principal consideration. An outline only of the subject can be presented even here, but I have endeavoured to make it somewhat less imperfect.

EMILY SHIRREFF.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

WHEN the first edition of this little work was exhausted, it became a question whether it should be allowed to drop out of print, or be in a great measure re-written. Finally, I have thought it best to do neither, but to republish it in its original form, with only a few notes and corrections. My reasons for this course are that, being as regards the Kinder-garten, a simple abstract of PRINCIPLES, these remain the same under any changed aspect of the practical work. What is said of them to-day remains true for ever, and that neglect of principles, that preference for the superficial part of Kinder-garten practice over the theory of education, on which it is based, and from which it derives its value, is still one of the most fatal hindrances to progress. Indeed, as Kinder-gartens multiply, it becomes even more necessary to repeat that in using Fröbel's gifts, we do nothing, or worse than nothing, unless we put into each exercise Fröbel's spirit and purpose.

The second part of the book, which refers to women's mission in connection with infant education, admits in like manner of little change, because there also general principles are laid down. The reasons that make certain studies valuable or imperative remain the same; and the appeal to women's right feeling in the matter is even more pressing than before. For the evil caused by women's ignorance of education, and of so many subjects that are essential to the education, are more felt in pro-

portion as Fröbel's System spreads, and we feel our dependence on the assistance of mothers, which they are too generally incapable of giving. Madame von Mahrenholtz speaks strongly of this deficiency as being the principal cause of the slow progress of the Kinder-garten in Germany. It is essentially mothers' work, because, however good the mere teachers may be, home co-operation is absolutely indispensable.

The appendix referring to hindrances in the work of the Fröbel Society I have also decided to leave as it was, because, although our position as a Society is different now from what it was when these remarks were written, we still have to bear in mind many of the same difficulties that met us at first, and still need to remember that a high standard, and united efforts, are the first requisites for success. The Society has founded a training college, which, under the able direction of Miss Bishop, will, we trust, do much to further our progress. We have persevered in the system of independent examinations, and adhere strongly to this principle ; but what we need more than any external measures, is the earnest conviction that we are engaged in a great work for humanity, one calling for energy and self-devotion, and before which all petty jealousies and separate interests cannot dare to lift their heads.

EMILY SHIRREFF.

May 1880.



FRÖBEL'S SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

SECTION I.

General Training for Little Children

THERE has for some years been a strong feeling in Germany of the need of reform in their whole system of national Education. Instruction had reached a point that was the envy of other nations, but real education kept no pace with the culture of the intellect alone. The foremost thinkers on this matter felt that the desired progress must be the result of more harmonious development of the whole nature, and that to be effectual it must begin in early childhood, and be cared for alike in all classes of the nation. Accordingly, the society established for the reform of education, the *Allgemeine Erziehungsverein*, has made it the principal object of its exertions to spread Kinder-garten schools over the country and to establish Normal Schools for teachers of the system. In England a similar movement has taken place. The Women's Education Union, by its strenuous work of reform, has helped to make the need of better early training felt; and the Fröbel Society founded somewhat later, and which has been in close connection.

with the Union, has had for its object to promote that early training through the Kinder-garten system. Such reforms have been found to be very difficult in Germany; but they are still more so in England, where philosophical principles of education are seldom appealed to, where every man who has knowledge is supposed competent to teach, and where teaching and educating are so commonly used as equivalent terms, that so-called educational discussions rarely go beyond the subject-matter and extent of knowledge to be imparted at a given time, and for a given purpose. One of the many evil consequences of this confusion is that several years are wasted beyond recall; since what is nominally called education begins at an age when real education should already have been placed upon a secure basis. The work of the true educator is to draw out all the latent capabilities of the human creature, to form habits and associations, and to discipline the will; the work of ordinary teachers begins only when the will has already acquired strength and bias, when habits and associations, good or bad, are already partly formed by the mere force of circumstances, when the mental faculty has already been exercised in some measure, and probably in a wrong direction. The teacher (if he has any educating insight or purpose at all) is likely to find that he has as much to undo as to do. He soon learns by sad experience the value of those seven or eight years of a child's life that have been ignorantly wasted or misused.

Fröbel was not the first to uphold the importance of early education—all philosophical writers on the subject have done the same; but he has given, in the Kinder-

garten method, a detailed application of the scientific principles he laid down, and established a system which takes the child from the cradle, and carries him through progressive periods of physical and mental development. Such a system requires, even for its partial application, the training of a very large number of female teachers; but for its application, as a means of national reform, it would require that mothers should be educated for their sacred office—that women generally should be taught to consider that intelligent care of the young is the first and most important work for which they need to fit themselves. Education in the nursery, and for some years after leaving it, is inevitably women's work; but in popular estimation mere women's work must be insignificant, and thus the most vicious of all the circles in which we have been wont to turn, has remained from generation to generation unbroken. Early education was neglected because the mothers to whom it belonged were unfit for the task; and women's education was neglected because no one could see that they had any work to do that required mental culture. And in spite of the endless discussions of the present day, the real interest in some quarters, the apparent interest in society generally, we are still turning round and round that same point, we are still elaborately seeking reasons why women should be allowed the privilege of mental training, and we are still wasting the first years of child-life, and adding hopelessly to the task of later instructors, because women have not that requisite training. Yet in no one thing in the whole order of the universe has nature spoken more strongly and directly than in this. She makes it impossible for us to alter or modify

her law. Do what we will, women must mould infant life and give the first direction to feeling and intelligence; all we can manage in opposition is to prevent them from consciously educating the child with a distinct and worthy purpose, and this we have, generally speaking, effectually done; the teaching of nature has been quite powerless against the *vis inertiae* of the two facts mentioned above—contempt for women's work, and ignorance of the true human purpose of education.

For proof of the ignorance we need not confine our observation to the nursery. Our Universities and our National Schools alike will furnish it abundantly. We are very apt, from the height of our national pride, to look down upon the benighted nations of the South; but if our people are not altogether in the same state of ignorance, it is Protestantism, not value for human culture, that has rescued them. Of all the indirect benefits conferred on us by the theory of liberty of conscience—that sent every man to ground his own faith on the Bible—the greatest perhaps has been the necessity thereby imposed of teaching the people to read it. Popular education, and in great measure that of women, had till of late years no other motive or purpose. But if the religious duty of enabling every one to read the Bible became gradually accepted, the religious duty of putting every human being in possession of the faculties bestowed by God has not yet been clearly recognised; and the ignorance of all classes in the community, to whom knowledge does not represent profit or advancement, has been the natural consequence.

Nothing, perhaps, would tend to alter popular views on this subject so much as the working and example of

Kinder-garten schools. In them Fröbel's system is minutely applied to the development of infant capacity. I feel convinced that the practical illustration of great principles thus given, the philosophical connection between all parts of the system, the results of rational training manifested in the difference between Kinder-garten pupils and other children of the same age when they meet together in more advanced schools, will more than anything else tend to prove to the reluctant public that *education has a scientific basis and a real human purpose* absolutely distinct from all questions of rewards, examinations, or advancement. Yet we have had such schools among us for years. In London, in Manchester, in Dublin—not to mention other places—there are excellent Kinder-garten institutions; but as regards influencing public opinion, scarcely anything has been done. Doubtless through their means many persons have been converted to the system, but it has not been sufficiently discussed, or the principles on which it rests sufficiently expounded, to make it clear to the public on what grounds these schools peculiarly claim our attention.* It is more than probable that many of the parents who have themselves acknowledged the benefit derived by their own children from Kinder-garten training, have referred it rather to this or that particular management or influence than to the legitimate effect of sound theory methodically worked out. The belief in particular facts and persons is so simple—and so English—while faith in wide principles is so alien to our habits of thought, that I could well imagine schools of this kind obtaining recognised success with-

* See Appendix

out attention being roused to the scientific cause of that success.

To the English public generally the Kinder-garten system, so far as it is known at all, is represented by the games which, being sold in inviting-looking boxes, have been purchased for nursery amusement, or perhaps as an introduction to ordinary object-lessons. These games, however, while they are doubtless a source of some amusement to the children in school, are also the tools, so to speak, to aid the teacher in her labours. Accuracy, observation, the first principles of reasoning, are taught by means of these simple toys, while nicety and dexterity of handling, and pleasure in active exertion, are trained by every exercise. And even were no information of much value gained at the same time, let any teacher say what difference in later school studies it would make if all children came to them ready provided with such habits. Nor is the training of this system solely, or even principally, directed to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge; it takes the child's whole nature, aiding its expansion physically and morally, as well as intellectually. The rhythmical movements, the dancing and singing games, are not only good for health, as mere exercise—they make the limbs supple, and improve both eye and ear. Moral training is carried on through the habit of strict obedience, under a gentle law ever referring to the will of God, who has placed helpless infancy under that loving care which represents His ceaseless love for all His creatures. And by directing observation to order and beauty in external things, and in human conduct as manifestations of God's rule and presence throughout the world, religious and moral

associations are formed, which, long before the age when any catechism would be intelligible, prepare the mind for the reception of all that is highest in Christianity or in philosophy.

This seems, perhaps, to claim much for a system of nursery training; but the system being founded on principles deduced from a careful study of human nature, it is evident that they must, if true, contain the germ of the highest development. The Kinder-garten aims in no way at making infant prodigies, but it aims successfully at putting the little child in possession of every faculty it is capable of using; at bringing him forward, as far as his puny strength will allow, ~~on lines~~ which he will never need to ~~for~~sake; at teaching, within his narrow range, what he will never have to unlearn; and at giving him the wish to learn, and the power of teaching himself.) We may safely anticipate that children so trained will make better use than others of all higher means of instruction in later years, and make fewer mistakes in judgment and in action; in other words, that they will have made more progress towards that which is the true aim of life, self-improvement and power of working for the service of others.

SECTION II.

Fröbel's Gifts

I HAVE said that the games which play so important a part in Fröbel's system are often under-valued, and all benefit lost, by their being treated as mere toys, or at best as the means of giving common object-lessons.

Nothing can be further from the inventor's purpose. According to that they stand as 'necessarily connected links.' They are not toys merely, because they are intended for instruction ; they are not for lessons only, since they are meant as games ; they combine both characters, and are designed to stimulate and guide the natural activity of the child in both directions. To fuse into one lesson work and play is the purpose of the Kinder-garten, and this fusion 'becomes possible only when the objects with which the child plays allow room for mental and bodily activity.' In addition to the disjointed use of what was given as a whole, the further mistake is generally made of placing the games in the hands of some nursery governess, or other person, who has never heard of Fröbel's system, probably has never been taught that nursery education requires any system at all, and the end is failure, sweetened by contempt for Fröbel's method, the just principles of which have been neglected or unknown.

It may be useful, therefore, to give some description of the 'gifts' (as these peculiar toys are called), and of the purpose they are destined to serve, before entering further into the exposition of Fröbel's theory, and likewise to speak of the more active games, without which the system of combined physical and mental development would be utterly incomplete. These games consist of songs and dancing, or rather of rhythmical movements, timed or regulated by song, and are shared in by all the children before they are of an age to employ themselves actively in any work of skill, whether in class or garden, or to practice real gymnastic exercises. It is almost impossible by mere description to convey a correct notion

of these play-dances. The little songs of which they are in a manner the accompaniment mostly tell some story, or describe some action, something relating to the visible world—to bird, or beast, or plant, or change of seasons, to the relations or affections familiar to the children, or some manual work of which they can mimic the action. Many of these songs have been translated into English,* and the exercises, which afford unfailing delight to the children, can be seen by any visitor to a Kinder-garten.

Something of the same kind is practised in every infant-school. There, also, sedentary work is varied by quick motion and singing; but the Kinder-garten *dancing*, as it is called, is at once more free and more rhythmical. A great variety of movements are executed in time and order; the children do not merely walk to music, but perform various actions which bring each limb in turn into exercise, and which, by requiring a great variety of attitudes, give suppleness as well as strength to the muscles. If I wished to describe in a few words the difference between the two, I might say that infant-school children are preparing to learn drill, and Kinder-garten children training for choric dancing. Some of the most important objects (in addition to the mere exercise), such as regularity, simultaneous movement, etc., are common to both, but the latter begin also to learn that sense of harmony and beauty which is never lost sight of in any part of Fröbel's system.

* Mrs Berry and Mde. Michaelis have published two series of songs partly translated, partly adapted, and a few original, with the music. Miss Heerwart has also published, under the title of "Music for the Kinder-garten," another collection of the same kind.

We come now to the sedentary games, and will take them in order.

The first gift is the ball.—Each child in the class is provided with one; they are all of the same size, and have a short string attached by which they may be suspended, but they are of different colours. The first purpose of giving the ball, as with every other object successively presented, is to draw the child's attention to all the obvious peculiarities that distinguish it from other surrounding objects, whether in form, in colour, in texture, or in properties—that is, whether hard or soft, fragile or elastic, etc.; and the ball is first selected on account of the simplicity of the spherical form making a single impression, requiring therefore no combined view of different lines and surfaces. The game or exercise consists of a series of movements executed with the ball, which is now raised, now lowered, placed to the right, then to the left, passed from one hand to the other, from one child to the other, noting the effect of each change in relation to the other objects and positions, the movements now quicker, now slower, being always executed by word of command, promptly, exactly, and together,—things which some may smile at as part of a school lesson, but which are not thought unimportant on the parade-ground of a regiment. At the beginning and ending of each game, whether in opening the box that contains the 'gift,' in taking out the objects, in passing them along from one to another, the same order and disciplined motion is exacted; and, besides the other results mentioned above, a sense of fellowship is created from acting together; and the gentleness enforced by the teacher, and naturally aided

by the order and rhythm, excludes all outward token of rude or unkind feeling, and thus tends to foster the opposite, to create an association of pleasure with kind and gentle intercourse. It may be observed here, that moral influence, direct or indirect, is always present in this system, and the repression of selfishness is a leading object. Nothing in the child's whole training is for one alone; there is emulation, but no competition for rewards, and the children's temper is saved from irritation by the absence of all that souring influence that comes from impotent effort and straining over solitary tasks.

The second gift consists of a sphere, a cube, and a cylinder.—By means of these the children's natural power of observation is drawn out to discover for themselves the difference between these forms and the various ways in which they could be used, etc. We have no longer the simple perception awakened by the ball, but sides, surfaces, lines, and circumference; and when these are clearly distinguished, the right terms for them are always given, so that when any fact connected with these figures is accurately apprehended, it is also accurately labelled in the child's memory, becoming thus of easy reference hereafter, whether in the advanced series of this peculiar instruction, or in approaching the study of geometry. There is this peculiarity in these games, though intended for such young children (from three to seven generally), there is no attempt to adapt the truths of science to childish apprehension, expressed in childish language; the whole aim is to direct infant observation to perceive, and budding intelligence to seize the true aspects and relations of such objects as are presented to

them, and at once to acquire the familiar use of the right terms, which must be learned whenever real study begins.

In the use of this second gift we, however, enter upon the ground in which Fröbel's system achieves the largest measure of actual instruction in the ordinary sense. The successive series of exercises with the cube, the sphere, and the cylinder, aided later by other 'gifts' and instruments of work, impart as they go on an accurate and familiar acquaintance with the facts and relations on which geometrical truths are founded, and some of the more obvious conclusions are arrived at by a process which makes them henceforth a part of the child's own experience. The advantage so gained in facilitating later study is very great, but far greater is the educational value of the training which has made accurate observation, reasoning from one fact to another, and the perception of necessary relations habitual. The boy who carries such habits to school will be among his fellows like the workman who is familiar with his tools, compared to the novice who is learning their names.

The third gift is a cube, composed of eight smaller cubes.—The principal object of the exercise with this is to lead the child to distinguish parts from the whole, to observe the distribution of parts, to count them, and to discover modes of construction with the pieces he possesses. The durable lessons learnt are of arithmetic and of symmetry; the former carried by simple steps up to fractions, the latter to whatever figures can be constructed with the little cubes alone. The child does not learn a single rule of arithmetic till he has dis-

covered the sense of it practically; he performs, according to order, certain operations with the objects before him, divides his little heap, adds, subtracts, and puts together again, and, lo! a certain result is clear before him; some brief formula may then be given, and he himself perceives that his memory of what he has done, and his power of doing exactly the same thing again, is aided by putting the result into words. The number of figures that may be constructed with the little cubes is greater than we should imagine till we see them before us. The most familiar objects are naturally chosen—a table, a bench, a door, a window, a flight of steps; but each furnishes the teacher with abundant means for leading the child to fresh observation, to the perception of similarities and differences, analogies and contrasts, of symmetry, with its accompanying sense of completeness, or of the want of symmetry, with its discordant effect. The lesson, if so it may be called, is mingled with whatever of narrative or of natural history the objects may suggest to the teacher. ‘The child,’ as Madame Pape Carpentier* remarks, in speaking of such lessons, ‘is not amused, but he is interested,’ and he is interested because his own mental activity is fully drawn out without fatigue. He has no natural aversion to, and

* See the admirable lectures delivered by this lady at the Sorbonne in 1867, when the Government, at the time of the Exhibition, summoned the schoolmasters from all parts of France to attend the Conferences on Education, in which many of the leading professors took part. Madame Carpentier had been requested to give her views on the application to schools generally of the method she used in the Salles d’Asile, which is founded on Fröbel’s principles. Her exposition was thought so good, that she was requested to continue it in a second, and again in a third lecture.

no incapacity for thought, as we may daily learn from the 'why?' with which he meets each new event in his experience; but he can think only about facts presented to his observation, not about words or remote action, of which he is unable to form a conception.

After each lesson, the children build according to their own fancy, emulating each other in their constructions, sometimes imitating some familiar object, sometimes forming mere symmetrical figures, as they happen to take more pleasure in one or the other, it matters not which, so long as originality and activity are both brought into play. 'Want of originality, in the highest sense of the word, among men is principally caused (says one of the best writers on Fröbel's system*) by the hindrances that keep down the early active tendencies of children, or at least give them no assistance.' And in another place she remarks, with equal truth, 'By independent action we prepare independent thought.'† In the Kinder-garten such preparation begins with the dawn of intelligence, and continues long enough to make the association of pleasure with the exercise of mental activity too strong to be easily broken.

The fourth gift is also a cube of equal dimensions with the former one, but subdivided into eight oblong pieces (or bricks, as the children call them); the length of each being twice its breadth, and the breadth twice its thickness. With these begins a new series of obser-

* B. Von Marenholtz Bulow, *Die Arbeit und die neue Erziehung*, p. 109.

† Idem, p. 181.

vations of lines and surfaces. The cube itself is familiar to the child, but the child finds that the pieces of which it is composed are different from the former ones. In those all the sides were alike in shape and size; here they vary, and he has new discoveries to make, and new names to learn in consequence. The method and the class of observations in this game naturally follow the same course as in the last, and the amusing work of construction follows in the same manner; first under dictation, and with commentaries by the teachers, and afterwards freely, according to each child's fancy. The same mode of instruction is followed with the fifth and sixth gifts, which in like manner are cubes, of the same size as the former ones, but differently subdivided, and with some pieces cut diagonally, so as to form triangular blocks introducing acute angles, and a whole new series of observations. Thus the child acquires almost insensibly more and more acquaintance with different lines and figures, and their relations to each other, laying the foundation for future study of geometry, which is further facilitated by his becoming familiar with the correct terms for all he deals with.

The next things we find used in two successive play-lessons are, first, *small sticks*, and, secondly, *thin laths*, which I mention together, as being very similar in use. The *sticks* are of 10 centimetres (somewhat more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches), the *laths* of 25 centimetres (rather more than 10 inches) in length. As I, however, have not space to enter into the detail of the lessons given by means of these new toys, it must suffice to say that they serve to continue the arithmetical instruction, but still more the construction of geometrical figures begun with

the cubes, leading the child to discover further facts, and reach further conclusions.

Up to this time solids and surfaces have been presented to his observation; now the sticks and laths represent lines, and he learns to form the outline of figures.* He now constructs for himself the angles which before were given to him by the cubes, and proceeds by laying the sticks in this direction or in that, to form other angles hitherto unknown, and to observe the points that distinguish them from the former class, their relations to the latter and to each other, etc.; and still, at each step, he has got firm hold of a fact, and has learnt the right designation for it.

The *laths* being flexible, and capable, therefore, of being interlaced, the figures constructed with them are in a measure fixed, and can be lifted from the table: the child thus learns to recognise the same forms in a different plane. Greater variety also is now possible. Triangles had been made with the little sticks; those made with the laths can be interlaced; lozenges in the same manner; figures with double lines joining and interlacing at the angles offer another series of changes—all pleasing by their symmetry, and exciting the fancy of the children to try and produce some new combination of their own. A glance at the plates in Madame

* For what reason the name of 'gifts' has been given to the objects above described, and not to those used in the further series of play-lessons, I do not know; but the difference is a merely technical one, and only worth noting in order that persons wishing to purchase the objects required for Kinder-garten instruction should not be misled.

Delon's book * would astonish most persons new to the method, by the extraordinary variety that these simple means can produce. It will be still more striking when we come to the further exercises I have yet to describe.

SECTION III.

Fröbel's Gifts—continued.

WITHOUT the assistance of diagrams it is very difficult to make any method of instruction in the Kindergarten even fairly intelligible; still, I believe some description of this kind to be so essential towards making the principles of the method clear to those who have no previous acquaintance with Kindergarten schools, that I must still trust to my reader's patience, and pursue the description through the remaining portions of the class teaching.

All the objects hitherto described as instruments of instruction, except the ball and cylinder, have dealt with straight lines, and the figures formed by those lines. We have the 'gifts' of solids, such as cubes, and bricks; then the games with sticks and laths, for constructing interlinear figures; after these begin a series of exercises upon curved lines, and these are

* *Methode Intuitive*, par Mde. Fanny Ch. Delon. This book gives an admirable account of the practical system, though rejecting some of Fröbel's philosophical views. The plates are invaluable in making the operations intelligible, and are remarkably full and clear.

conducted by means of small metal rings and portions of rings. Besides the new facts that are learnt in this fresh field of observation, a complete new set of figures may be produced, and the imitation of objects passes from that of things constructed by human art, which are mostly rectilinear, to that of natural objects, in which curved lines in every possible variety prevail. In the first exercise four rings are distributed to each child, with the customary forms used in opening all the other games. The teacher begins by making some remarks on the rings themselves—their size, weight, the metal they are made of; and then the lesson turns on their peculiar form, which the children learn is to be called a 'circle.' This is recognised as having been seen before in the base of the cylinder, but the ring gives only the outline or circumference. The circles now in use are equal to each other; this is shown by laying one upon the other; then they are laid side by side in actual contact, and an important fact is discovered by the children, namely, that the circles, if not allowed to cross, can touch each other in one point only.

Three other exercises follow successively, in which circles, semicircles, and various segments of circles, are used. Sometimes the circumference is to be reconstructed with the various parts, sometimes the segments are to be arranged so that lines of different curves, whether broken or continuous, should be produced. Now they are placed side by side, and it is seen that, as with the circles, the segments also can touch at one point only; then again they are crossed, and it is manifest that while any portions of a circle

may be so placed as to intersect each other in one point only, circles, if crossed one over the other, must have two points of intersection.

Such is the kind of instruction conveyed in these exercises; but the important thing to consider is the method, which remains the same throughout, not teaching, in the ordinary sense, but leading the children to learn—exciting their interest till they wish to observe, compare, and note results for themselves; when some new thing is to be learnt, so arranging the lesson that it shall bring the fact to view in such a manner as will lead the child to observe it himself. It thus becomes his own discovery, and precious to him henceforth as nothing merely committed to his memory will ever be. The child is placed by the teacher in such a relation to external objects, that he naturally questions them; he goes through the process of self-education, but is saved from the mistakes of the self-educated by walking unconsciously in the groove carefully prepared for him.

It is evident that with the addition of circles and other curved lines, the variety of symmetrical figures that can be constructed is immensely increased. It is impossible without plates to give any idea of what that variety really is, and what the beauty of the designs produced by the simple juxtaposition and interlacing of curves. When we look at some of the plates in such a work as Mde. Delon's, and learn that the patterns given were the independent invention of little children under eight years of age, we gain a truer idea than we otherwise could do of the extent to which this system develops the sense of beauty, and the feeling of harmony and symmetry as essential to beauty; and this is not

merely the foundation of all artistic creation in its highest, as in its lowest forms, but of artistic enjoyment, adding to the pleasure of life in the cottage as in the palace, wherever the forms and tints of nature speak to the imagination and the heart of man.

The rings end the series of exercises of this kind. In ~~and~~ the *games* hitherto described, from the ball to the circles, and segments of circles, the child has had ready-made objects furnished to him, which he could place or displace, but not otherwise alter; this, however, is but one portion of Kinder-garten instruction, which aims at training manual dexterity and love of active work, no less than at awakening and directing intelligence. Fröbel is never weary of repeating that man must not only *know* but *produce*; not only think but work; and that the capacity for work must be trained in early childhood, side by side with the observing and apprehending faculty, and before the memory is burdened with words and symbols. I have, for the sake of convenience, gone through the series of games without interruption, but the various kinds of work are also taught almost from the beginning, and the facts learnt in playing with the sticks and laths, and in forming figures with them, are applied in working a great variety of patterns.

The first work to be learnt is *plaiting*. This is done with strips of paper, and the art consists in the regularity and neatness it requires, both of which are difficult to attain by little uncertain fingers hitherto ignorant of purpose.

Weaving, which follows next, is also done with strips of paper laced in and out through other strips fastened

on a little frame. Different coloured papers are generally used, and a pattern is given to the child till he can make one for himself. Folding and cutting out complete the series, and are begun about the same time as the latter games. The advantage of this sort of hand exercise over needlework is manifold—they follow in the same direction as the *games*, illustrate in some measure the same principles, they lead on to drawing, which is a very important part of the subsequent work. Needlework is confined to girls, while boys in ordinary schools learn no manual art till they are fit to hold a pen or a pencil; and, lastly, they offer variety and a certain amount of beauty which please and interest the children, while nothing can enliven the dullness of the hem or the seam. The latter will not, however, lose in the long run, for the dexterity, neatness, and accuracy of hand acquired in the various operations enumerated above, and followed by drawing, will make needlework very easy to learn hereafter.

I cannot here enter into more detail concerning these various forms of work, which are, in fact, partly exercises of mere manipulation, partly opportunities for displaying fancy. *Cutting-out*, which is the latest, is by far the most difficult, and gives for the first time to the child the use of a tool, the delicate handling of which is the most important thing to be learnt. *Folding* is less difficult and less artistic in its results, but it affords the opportunity of continuing the elementary geometrical instruction begun in the various games. By folding squares of paper in different ways, but always with strict attention to accuracy in bringing the edges exactly together, the lines produced divide and

subdivide the original space, forming figures of different shapes and dimensions; or they intersect each other, and form angles of various kinds. Some of these are familiar in the games with cubes or sticks, and the proper designations of any new figures are learnt without trouble; since a child can remember the names of right or acute angles, of squares or triangles just as easily as those of any familiar objects around him, so long as they have been made equally obvious, and have been equally the objects of his own observation and experience. It is curious to hear a class of little children so taught, eagerly pointing out in surrounding furniture or decoration of the room, which are the right or the acute angles, or which the horizontal, perpendicular, or oblique lines, showing that they have accurately retained the names which they have learned, one by one, in order to register their own observations. Perfectly familiar with the thing, they have felt the convenience of being able to refer to it.

In the course of his folding, the child also discovers by the result of his own observation the important fact that the angles formed at one point of intersection of two or more lines must be four right angles, or equal to four right angles; and the fact so acquired is to him a self-evident truth. Such empirical knowledge may be an improper mode of approaching exact science, but it is the only mode possible in childhood, and it will be found no small advantage later that the intelligence has learnt to view such facts as practical truths. What has been clearly and indelibly fixed in the mind by the one method, will far more readily be accepted on scientific grounds when the age for scientific method

is come. After some manual skill, and some accuracy of eye and touch, have been acquired, the first steps are made towards learning to draw. 'Fröbel required from every educated person a certain degree of skill in drawing, for the purpose of ensuring accurate perception of objects, and likewise to make use of plastic art as a means of cultivation, and to give the capacity for art enjoyment even to those who possess no power themselves. He considered it as highly important that a child should acquire some facility in drawing before he learns to read or write, since the representation of actual things should precede the representation of signs and words.'* This is a peculiar view, but those who might dispute the question of precedence will hardly deny that drawing has never yet been made use of in education as it might be; that a study which, besides all its practical advantages, affords the most admirable means of training accuracy of observation, and truth of reproduction, of cultivating at once the senses and the most valuable mental habits, has been strangely neglected. 'Accurate and well-cultivated senses lead,' says the author just quoted, 'to accurate perception and comparison, and thus the elements of just thought are prepared.' The reason why children seldom learn to think from books is that the ideas presented take no hold of their minds. It would be curious to inquire how much of the loose thinking, the hazy perception of truth, which characterise the majority of even the educated portion of mankind, might be traced back to

* Die Arbeit und die neue Erziehung, Baronin von Marenholtz Bulow, p. 133.



the absence of any definite impressions made in childhood in connection with the instruction given to them. They are occupied with words, and words are vague and often void of meaning to them. Outside the school-room they acquire definite impressions, but they are acquired at random, and may be wholly wanting in accuracy. They will, however, exercise more influence than what is learnt at school, for the instruction there given is quite apart from any practical region, and has no solid foundation in observation or experience.

Kinder-garten drawing-lessons begin in the humblest manner; the first attempt, before the little fingers are able to guide a pencil, is made by forming the outline of figures with a succession of holes pricked along ruled paper, or over a pattern; the difficulty to be surmounted being that of making the holes at equal distance and of equal size. This kind of work is carried on in various manners, but need not detain us here; that which is a preparation for drawing is continued till the hand is steady enough to use a pencil. As soon as this point is attained, first a ruled slate, and then ruled paper is used. The ruling, which is in regular squares, has the advantage of saving the beginner from gross errors till the steadier hand and eye can draw correct lines, true both in direction and proportion. When this is in some measure achieved, the pupils begin to reproduce in drawing the same kind of geometrical figures and symmetrical patterns which they formerly constructed with the sticks, laths, or rings. Not till eye and hand have been exercised in tracing these outlines is drawing from objects attempted; and, indeed, the little pupils of the real Kinder-garten rarely

can attain to that point; it must be reserved, as more advanced instruction is reserved by Fröbel, for what he called transition classes (*vermittlung's Klasse*), the teaching in which is intended to bridge over the chasm between the complete object-lessons of the earlier period and the comparatively abstract studies of later schools.

Little, however, as the Kinder-garten pupils may achieve in drawing, it is certain that a child who has acquired command over his pencil, in whom the feeling of symmetry and proportion has been early awakened, and accuracy of observation daily trained and tested, would join a drawing-class ready to profit at once by the lessons of a good master, while his contemporaries are slowly learning to use their untrained senses and clumsy, unsteady fingers.

In Fröbel's system, drawing, as I said before, precedes writing; and writing so far precedes reading that the pupil must be able to trace at once the symbols which are given to him as representing certain sounds. The methods of teaching to read and write differ in different Kinder-gartens,* and would at any rate not be easily made intelligible by mere description. The pupils, generally, acquire these essential arts later than other children; but this is in Fröbel's view an advantage, since he thought little of what young children can learn from books, and much of what they acquire from the observation of nature and of surrounding objects, and from the trained capacity for dealing with outer things. All necessary acquisitions will subse-

* German method and English differ somewhat in this respect.

quently be made with comparative facility, in proportion as the senses and general intelligence have been cultivated. Ordinary schools made it their great business to impart knowledge: the Kinder-garten aims at developing the human being. It is only by the fitness of their pupils in riper years for the manifold work of life that the two systems can be fairly compared and judged.

SECTION IV.

Principles of Fröbel's System

I have given a rapid sketch of the principal games and exercises of the Kinder-garten. Several others might be mentioned, such as modelling, which was greatly valued by Fröbel, and which, strange as it appears, is practised by little children and carried on through the later classes, but I have said enough for my purpose; and will only add here a few words on the care of animals and of a garden, which are introduced whenever it is possible into Kinder-garten training, and which have the advantage of combining in a peculiarly happy manner bodily exercise and moral influence with the cultivation of intelligence.

The children work themselves in their own patch of ground, but, although allowed to follow freely their own fancies, it is a natural result of the method pursued, that they observe what is done around them, and desire to understand and to imitate. They are led to observe the peculiar nature of the plants or the animals that are given to their care, and the wish easily arises to learn

how they should be tended, why such or such things are good or bad, and to watch the changes that take place, and which stimulate the desire to know more. Nature seemed to Fröbel the great book from which the child must have its first lessons, as the man there learns his highest wisdom; thus, amidst natural objects, he exercises not only intelligence, but activity, steadiness of purpose in giving the required care from day to day, kindness, in practically ministering to the wants or pleasure of feebler creatures, and in giving help to companions if needed, and imagination and sense of beauty in the daily admiration of bird and blossom, of earth and sky, rising thence in wonder and thankfulness to the Father in heaven, who made and cares for all.

I have said above that a fuller statement of details is not needed for my purpose, which is simply to explain enough to make Fröbel's principles of education intelligible. Nothing but long and careful study of the system in actual working will give such knowledge of details as would enable any person to practice the peculiar mode of instruction, or to understand many important points, such as the length of time to be given to each exercise, or which of these may be used simultaneously. The most elaborate descriptions would only mislead the reader, if they induced him to fancy that any book could supersede attendance in the classes themselves. My purpose, I repeat, is merely to supply illustrations of a method so deeply philosophical in its principle, yet so simple in its outer aspect, that its greatest danger is that of being treated as a plaything.

Playthings in one sense, indeed, these 'gifts' of Fröbel's were intended to be, for he had watched the childish instinct for play, and had recognised in that the germ of man's activity, and hence through games he devised the means of drawing out that active instinct into conscious exercise. He sought to guide and direct the childish impulse, and that direction gives the playthings their educational value. They are toys to the child; but instruments of serious mental discipline to the teachers, who know that through them all, used in their proper sequence, runs a distinct and gradually unfolding purpose. The teacher who forgets this, and allows the gifts to be toys in his hands also, destroys their whole value. Nothing is more strongly insisted on by Madame von Marenholtz Bulow, in the admirable work I have before quoted, than the folly of those who trifle with the order and purpose of the games. Fröbel's method is one whole founded on a great principle: those who break it up and select parts for their own use, show that they have never penetrated below the surface.

Let us then consider what are the principles on which this peculiar system of education rests. At its root lies the deep conviction of the religious duty of training to full and harmonious development all the faculties, bodily and mental, with which the child is endowed by nature; hence its progress is like organic growth, rather than the thing of rules and conventionalities that education is too generally suffered to be.

It may in general terms be described as an inward method, in contrast with ordinary methods which are mostly outward. The latter treat a child as a creature

who is to be made to do and to learn such and such things according to set rules; the former views each child as a creature of indefinite capability for doing and learning, but whose own instincts and desires must be turned towards the things we deem desirable. The ordinary educator has a standard of attainment before his eyes which his pupils must reach; Fröbel also has a standard, not of attainment for a given age, but of full and perfect development of humanity; and he studies the tendencies of childhood, and the aptitudes of each child, in order to bend his efforts towards drawing them out and giving them a right direction. And the same with moral training; the one orders conduct, the other cultivates motives; the one teaches catechisms to little children, the other opens their eyes to see beauty and goodness, and leads the heart to God. The one uses habit, the great power of education, as an outward constraint, the other as an inward regulator; the one hates a lie as much as the other, but Fröbel brings intellectual habits and associations to aid the moral precept, and makes clearness and accuracy so essential to the child's daily enjoyment of his games and occupations, that all the byways to untruth, such as exaggeration, confusedness of mind, inaccuracy of speech, are cut off. As far as the child's horizon extends, he sees clearly and speaks plainly, and this atmosphere of intellectual truth in which he lives is favourable to the growth of moral rectitude.

It is common to look upon the Kinder-garten as merely another form of the infant-school, — a better system of teaching little children; it is this, but it is much more; it is the first step in a wide connected

system of education, the first working of principles which continue to work throughout childhood and youth till the educator has finished his task, and resigns it to the hands of those whom he has led to consider self-culture a task that closes only when the final close falls upon all earthly endeavour. This vastness of purpose, contrasted with the narrow limits of an infant-school, increases the difficulty of explaining the Kinder-garten system; its practical method is for little children, but every educational aim points beyond them to the period when fuller knowledge may be sought, and fuller development of faculty becomes possible.

It is because Fröbel's system is one of development and direction, rather than of teaching in the ordinary sense, that he begins his study of child-nature at such an early period. The first dawn of intelligence, the first active tendencies and desires must be watched and tended, and thus education begins not in the Kinder-garten even, but in the nursery. Fröbel is not intent upon *giving*, but upon *drawing out*, all that lies in germ in the infant nature. He does not believe that education can do more than aid and direct the natural development and provide the right food for the mental growth; but he affirms that this work of unfolding and directing is alone education, and that consequently if the infant years are wasted, if the budding powers, the first desires and active instincts of the young creature are left undirected, the good or the evil fruit will henceforth depend on circumstances mostly beyond the educator's control. His system of early training does, as we have seen, lead to no insignificant progress in mere

instruction, considering the age of the pupils, but such instruction is the means, not the end ; the real purpose is the harmonious unfolding of the child's whole nature with a view to free self-development and action.

Freedom and action are more valued by Fröbel than by educators generally. He has none of that fear of vigorous character and sturdy will, which created the old systems of home and school discipline, and the convenient prejudice that feebleness is womanly ; but the freedom that he strives to place his pupils in possession of, he leads them to exercise within the moral bounds of conscience, love, and reverence, within the intellectual bounds laid down by reason and the sense of harmony and beauty which every Kinder-garten game tends to associate with active enjoyment. Fröbel exacts obedience as rigidly as any other rational educator ; but he leads the child first to feel, and then to know, that obedience to higher wisdom is part of the order of nature in which he lives. Freedom and law are not in opposition for the child any more than for the man, since settled law is the foundation of permanent freedom.

Action in conduct and in work is the practical expression at once of the character and of the intellect, which find little room to show themselves in ordinary systems of instruction ; thus all Kinder-garten teaching ends in work—the pupil must reproduce what he has learnt, he must express his own thoughts or fancies through the medium of the various exercises I have enumerated ; and the habit of independent work daily strengthens will and steadfastness of purpose, without which a child may at times be easier to manage, but the absence of which makes the man or woman useless for

the duties of life. In proportion as conduct covers a far larger portion of human life than abstract thought or knowledge, so does Fröbel value the child's work—honest, accurate work—beyond his progress in information. Work, which is the bread-winning necessity for the mass of every nation, he considers to be also the right engine of mental and physical development for all mankind. Men who cannot reproduce the image that has struck them, or embody the thought that possesses them, are, according to Fröbel's view, maimed of their just proportions. He would have the hand no less dextrous, the eye no less accurate, than the judgment is sure; hence his extreme value for drawing and modelling. The test with him of a child's thorough apprehension is that the fact or image apprehended shall be reproduced in *form*, if such as to be capable of being so represented, or at least in accurate language. It is the teacher's business to present no ideas or objects to the child's mind that are beyond his power of clear apprehension. The highest thought to which he can be led, that of God's love and goodness, comes to him in the clear intelligible form of fatherly care and wisdom.

Most educational reformers, since Pestalozzi, had recognised the value of manual labour as part of the training of youth, but they failed by keeping the work and the instruction too much apart; while Fröbel so orders the work that it becomes itself the instrument of instruction, as we have seen in the construction of figures with the cubes and bricks. The child must produce, must express his own fancy with the materials before him; but while he does so he is learning the first principles of symmetrical order and of geometry. He

is exercising his senses, acquiring steadiness of hand and accuracy of eye, but he is also gaining the elements of positive knowledge.

If now, after this review of Fröbel's principles, we go back to the games and exercises before described, we shall see that they tend to forward each of the objects he deemed important, and to harmonise them all. In each part we may see that the natural impulse or capacity has first been studied, and the practical method so ordered as to unfold and direct it to the higher aims of life.

The earliest mental manifestations in the infant are the notice he takes of surrounding objects, and the desire for activity, shown first in mere movements of the limbs, and next in play; hence Fröbel uses play as the means of directing the activity in the right channel, and by means of games, such as those of the balls and cubes, and afterwards by various exercises, employs the active propensity and prepares it for real work.

The next faculty that Fröbel takes advantage of, is the instinct of curiosity, so strong in children, that before they can speak they may be seen trying every limb and sense in the effort to make nearer acquaintance with some new object; accordingly in the Kinder-garten new objects are successively presented in such a manner that the natural instinct is gradually developed into a habit of inquiry, the first foundation of love of knowledge. And each new thing learnt, having been acquired, not by an effort of memory, but by the exercise of the child's own observation and understanding, is a real step in advance. It may be infinitesimally small, but it remains an acquisition for ever, and a sure founda-

tion for the next step. Side by side with curiosity the faculty of observation is developed. Roused at first by the perception of light, and colour, and motion, it is gradually led in Fröbel's games to dwell on form and other properties of the objects presented, as, for instance, with the cubes and cylinders, and afterwards through the various exercises which bring new forms to view or new properties, such as magnitude and numbers.

> The senses are naturally cultivated in children by all that attracts their observation—the eye, the ear, the touch, are learning many a lesson before the child can run or speak, and there is evident pleasure in the exercise. Fröbel takes advantage of this sense of enjoyment, and trains the senses to accuracy and delicacy through a series of games in which the children delight, by the various kinds of work in which they exercise their own ingenuity, and especially by drawing, which he held in such high value in almost every department of active training. If we watch little children when they first begin to run about and play together, we see that they naturally follow the lead, and have a sense of fitness and order in doing so with a certain regularity. Marked recurring intervals, for instance, for particular words or movements, excite pleasure. Fröbel seizes upon this natural sense, and makes it serve the important purpose of preserving strict order in the games he established. Children recognise the law, learn to feel the help it gives in play, and are more ready to own it in whatever thing they have to do. Children love and seek companionship: the instinct of sympathy is strong, though so often crossed by the selfish instinct. Fröbel orders every game and lesson

so that they impart the sense of a something in common among the children—something that would be marred if disunion, or ill-humour, or rudeness, forced the little companions apart.

Finally, the sense of beauty, as much a part of the child's nature as the active instinct, shown at first in delight at bright colours or the flame of a candle, is gently fostered and directed from beauty of colour to that of form and symmetry, as by the construction of regular figures with bricks, and the different kinds of artistic work ; to harmony of sound and rhythm of movement, by means of the songs and dances ; to the loveliness of nature and the wonder of her operations which garden work keeps ever present to eye and mind, and thence by easy transition to the beauty of moral action, such as comes within childish apprehension,—unselfishness, courage, help given to the feeble and the sick ; till, little by little, reverence for more perfect goodness and power, which are felt to surround and shelter the child's life, becomes the foundation of religious love and trust.

Thus, through the whole field of infant education, every natural tendency is watched ; and as it unfolds in the genial atmosphere of love and care, it is so directed that habit and association shall cement each step of progress made, and prepare the path for the future.

'The object of education,' says one of Fröbel's ablest commentators, 'is to bring man into the most complete harmony with God and Nature ;'* and the system of the

* Hanschmann, Friedrich Fröbel, die Entwicklung seine Erziehungsidee in seinem Leben, p. 169.

Kinder-garten was framed to facilitate the first steps in that great life-long endeavour.

SECTION V.

*Fröbel's System in relation to ordinary Schools**

ONE of the objections that must be met in recommending the Kinder-garten for young children is the difficulty of carrying the pupils from this to ordinary school instruction. It is the only real difficulty that occurs in the wide application of Fröbel's system, and even this is easily overcome by those who have grasped the real spirit of the method ; for the latter, being founded on the actual facts of human nature, must evidently be no less true in principle, though not in external form, for one age as for another. Thus, although games with balls and cubes and sticks are adapted only to infant intelligence, yet the habit of observing resemblances and differences, of testing facts by experience, is no less valuable when pursuing the most abstruse study. The Kinder-garten has dealt with the concrete only, it has given object-lessons in the truest sense of the word ; but it has taught the correct name for every fact, and the habit of accurate language is the foundation of

* The subject of this section has been dealt with separately in a pamphlet by Miss Shirreff, called "The Kinder-garten in relation to Schools," published two years ago. Lately, another pamphlet by the same writer, has, by mistake, been published with nearly the same title, but its scope is different. Its object is to explain and elucidate Mde. de Portugall's synoptical table of Fröbel's System, one of the most valuable contributors to Kinder-garten literature, showing the connection of every portion of the early training with the fullest development later education can reach.

scientific teaching and of accurate thought. (Fröbel begins at the very lowest germ of intelligence ; but as he always teaches a truth, or leads the child to observe truly, he is always laying the sure ground for fuller instruction in the future. The child has much to learn as he goes from the Kinder-garten to school, but he has *absolutely nothing to unlearn* ; and that fact covers so large a ground on which time and faculties are generally wasted, that it alone would be sufficient to make the Kinder-garten pupil acceptable to his schoolmaster, even did he bring no other recommendation.

The great difficulty is to pass from the concrete to the abstract—from object-lessons to working by rules and formulæ, of grammar and arithmetic. But it must be remembered that the step thus taken is in the direction of natural development ; and we carry with us the daily unfolding power of the intelligence carefully trained to habits that make the transition comparatively easy. Also it must be borne in mind that as regards arithmetic, the Kinder-garten pupil has already made unusual progress. In the work he has been trained to do, every artistic lesson has had a geometrical or arithmetical object likewise ; he has accurately learned many facts concerning numbers, and their relation to one another ; he can perform correctly and understand clearly the meaning of the four first operations of arithmetic. Working by rules will therefore simply be a different method of going over the old ground. But he has performed these operations with fractions as well as with units, and thus is familiar with what in the ordinary method he would not approach till much later. So likewise with geometry, of which the foundation has

been so accurately laid in the games and exercises, and the correct terms been rendered so familiar, that the child is ripe for learning what generally is reserved for a much later period. Here, as at other stages of mental growth, clear perception leads to true conception; and the child who has daily practised certain operations in the concrete, will quickly apprehend the rules and formulæ as the convenient expressions by which previously acquired knowledge is summed up and made fit to reason upon in the acquisition of further knowledge. Kinder-garten training does not prepare so directly for grammar as for mathematics, but it possesses no small advantages even here. Children accustomed always to use the correct term for what they are dealing with, to feel so strongly the necessity of understanding what they do, or what is before them, that they *must* ask the meaning of the terms they use and the operations they perform, will easily be led to seek for themselves why words should be used in one order rather than another, which word in a given sentence denotes a thing, which other an action, and which again marks the time, or the place, or the quality of the thing they are speaking of. Thus they will learn to distinguish the parts of speech from a sort of necessity of their own minds; and the analysis of sentences will precede the rules of grammar. With geography and history the same advantage will be felt; the early topographical observations he has been led to make around him—the form of the garden or the pond; the stream always running one way; the wider view obtained by climbing up the hill; the sun sometimes shining on one side of the house, sometimes on the other; the moon occasionally lighting him up to bed,

while at other times bright stars shine alone in the darkened heavens;—all these things, which the child has observed, has thought and asked about again and again, and learned to speak of in accurate language, afford so many links by which the physical geography of wider regions becomes easily knit to his experience and interest. The little stories that he has listened to have never been without a purpose. Where they have not related to facts of natural history, they have touched upon conduct, upon the lives of good men—later on of great men, whose goodness or power had a wider field. The stories are necessarily interrupted, because the child's ignorance prevents his understanding more, and each such interruption in a child so trained leads to a desire to shake off the ignorance, and to take interest in that wide region he begins dimly to see beyond.

Thus the transition from Kinder-garten exercises to school instruction is not a difficult one, as I said before, in the hands of those who thoroughly understand the system; though, if children were taken from the Kinder-garten and suddenly thrown into the midst of ordinary school teaching, doubtless there would ensue a period of arrest and confusion. 'Education according to nature is impossible without harmony between the treatment of the earliest years with that of later periods, for Nature knows no chasms; she ever prepares the later development through that which went before.'* It is, therefore, essential that the 'transition classes' (*vermittlung's Klasse*), as Fröbel calls them, should be a recognised senior department of the Kinder-garten;

* Mde. von Marenholtz Bulow, p. 107.

that children, in short, instead of leaving the latter at seven or eight years old, should pass into that department for a year at least, and not go to school till they have grown accustomed to learn from books as well as from objects. In these classes they would learn to read and to write, both operations being immensely facilitated by the habit of remarking resemblances and differences of form, and of constructing lines and figures of various kinds. The little hand has already, through the Kinder-garten exercises, acquired steadiness enough to guide the pen, and the eye so much accuracy that not only letters, but words will be easily recognised. In these classes, also, the early lessons of drawing will be continued, and attention still be fixed upon natural objects and the facts that belong to them, which hereafter will form the groundwork of instruction in physics or natural history. Not only in this manner does Fröbel consider that a child is prepared to make good use of learning, but that he will come to school studies with so much mental preparation that it shall be possible to shorten the hours usually devoted to certain necessary subjects, so far as to leave time for drawing, for the more advanced study of physics and natural history, and for the development of manual dexterity and æsthetic feeling, whether in plastic art or in mere handicraft. Fröbel would consider the early education to have been thwarted and made useless, if the youth were not trained to the exercise of his bodily senses and faculties, as fully as the child was so trained in the Kinder-garten. If book-learning stifled in him the active creative power which was to Fröbel, as completely as the reasoning faculty, the stamp of true

humanity, education would in his view be a failure. 'The present generation,' he said, 'sickens through knowledge, and can only be made sound through action.' Thus stated, the opinion might at once be objected to as applying to Germany only, not to England, where action is always valued, even too much above knowledge; yet it is in one sense true for us also. Direct education with us also is intellectual only; morally it is due to indirect influences, and as regards action it is left to the play-ground. The physical development in Fröbel's method, the training of hand and eye, of all the limbs and all the senses, is systematically ordered towards a definite purpose; while the active exercise is intellectual as well as physical. Both are truly educational; and the practical judgment, which is their result, will be based on true principles.


Hence the feeling which all Fröbel's disciples share, that much reading is not advisable for the young. They hold, even more than other educators, that development of the mental faculties, not the acquisition of knowledge, is the purpose of education. 'With us,' says Mde. Von Marenholtz Bulow, 'childhood sickens, under the early over-pressure of the understanding, and the want of opportunity for bodily and creative activity, which cultivates the will and power of action. . . . Learning too early and too much, that is, too much for the power of working out the knowledge, the preponderance of receptivity, with almost entire absence of production, with no opportunity for practical realisation—this leaves no room for the fresh, full, natural life which is proper to childhood and youth.'* It is accordingly an object

* *Die Arbeit und die neue Erziehung*, p. 40.

of the Fröbel method to hinder the ripening of the reasoning and critical faculty without corresponding practical activity. 'Independent action must be the preparation for independent thought.'

For all these reasons it is well that children should begin ordinary school studies upon the Kinder-garten principle; and, lastly, it is well that this should be so, because teachers imbued with Fröbel's doctrines alone feel the deep power of that simultaneous cultivation of the child's whole nature, of which the foundation is laid in the Kinder-garten. They alone have studied how to bind the æsthetic and moral training with the intellectual development, and feel that only so combined does either produce its full fruits. Until this shall become the acknowledged aim of all education, it is well at least to keep the child while we can under these vivifying influences, to lead him on so far, at least, in the right direction, that he shall be sensible of some unnatural discord when the too common tone of schools and of ordinary life reveals to him that knowledge and goodness are not always found together, and that even good and clever men can deform human life by the absence of all that sense of beauty which has been to him, since he could first see and feel, an essential element of happiness. The shock may be rude to the poor child who awakes thus in another world, as it were, from that in which his own faculties opened to life; but the very change may enhance the beauty of the former experience; and, as far away from home the unforgotten accents of our native tongue ring as music in our ears, so the children, turned out from their garden of Paradise into the wilderness of common life, may perchance bear all

the more closely in their hearts the memory of that holy triad of beauty, goodness, and truth, whose exquisite harmony was ever present in the teaching that guided their earliest steps; and whose influence may strengthen and refresh them through many a later hour of trying contact with that lower state of things which we venture to call civilisation.



SECTION VI.

Fröbel's System in Relation to Industrial Training and the Life of the People

IF I have succeeded in convincing the reader that the difficulty of introducing Kinder-garten pupils to ordinary school life, of bridging over the chasm between instruction through objects, and instruction through books, is one easily surmounted, and that the child who has enjoyed that early training will come so well prepared to make the best kind of progress in actual study, that it little matters though the latter be somewhat deferred—it will be evident that, as regards the cultivated classes of a nation, the groundwork laid in the Kinder-garten is altogether advantageous. We have now to consider what it does for those whose position excludes them from later culture, and who must early in life be trained to industrial arts, or even be content with receiving no mental training at all after the years spent in elementary schools.

This is in one sense the most important side of the question, because affecting the widest phase of rational life. Fröbel's system would still be invaluable, even if it were fitted only for those who will have the means of later culture; but it could lay no claim to being a system of true human education, because it would lack the element of universality, which must be the characteristic of the latter. This, however, is just what Fröbel's system does possess; it belongs to no class or nation, but to all. Wherever children are to be found endowed with ordinary human faculties, those faculties, moral, intellectual, and physical, are capable of being directed so as to ensure their harmonious development. No normally constituted human creature is incapable of being led to observe nature, to apprehend facts correctly, to exercise bodily activity and manual dexterity, to admire beauty, to love goodness, to revere God. Such direction, then, which is the aim of Fröbel's system, is a universal foundation of education; and it is further evident that the less chance any young creature has to share the treasure of culture hereafter, the more needful is it that this, which can be made a universal heritage, should be secured to him early.

Again, if the Kinder-garten training can, as I showed in the last paper, facilitate the after-work of school, leaving time for other instruction, none can require it so much as those children to whom a few years of elementary teaching will be the whole of intellectual education, who must begin practical life at an age when other children are under tuition, and will ever after have scanty leisure to add to their small stock of knowledge. Every new facility for culture that can be given

to this class is immensely more valuable than to the more fortunate minority, who can extend their education over ten more years of life, and can always command the best sources of knowledge, and the tuition that will make those sources available. In elementary education, therefore, Fröbel's system answers to a want that is daily more felt, as we strive too often in vain to cram the barest elements of knowledge into the few years the poor man can give to his child's mental improvement. The London School Board has recognised the value of Fröbel's method of early training, by appointing Miss Lyschinska to introduce a knowledge of the Kinder-garten system among the infant school teachers; and earlier still, the authorities of the Stockwell Training College showed the same appreciation by their appointment of Miss Heerwart as directress of a complete Kinder-garten branch of their college work. The danger attending these measures, however valuable they are as first steps, and as indications of a growing sense of the value of Fröbel's principles, is, lest the system should be judged by what must be the very slight results to be so obtained. In nothing, perhaps, is a little proficiency so dangerous as in this, because it is so easy to make the *practice* seem perfect, while the principles to which the practice owes all its value are ignored. As I have before remarked (p. 7), if the children's games are mere games to the teacher also, the whole thing is educationally useless.

The children of the poor will not probably in a given time profit as much by the Kinder-garten exercises as the children of more favoured classes, whose home habits have made good language familiar, have intro-

duced them to a larger vocabulary, and given them the use of many things which may have refined the sense of touch, and enlarged their perceptions; for as every hour of life is training the mere infant in one way or another, all its surroundings are, with or without purpose or method, influencing the future education; but this is only another reason why Kinder-garten training is doubly essential to the poor child who depends for his entire mental culture on what he gets out of home.

The passage from object-lessons to ordinary school lessons may in like manner be perhaps more laborious to the poor man's child than to the better nurtured, for there is less nimbleness of intellect, if we may so express it, when the traditions of culture are wanting; but when this difficulty is overcome, the advantage possessed by the Kinder-garten pupil over a child taught in the ordinary infant school becomes apparent. The two children may be about equal in reading, writing, and arithmetic; but the one gets through his tasks laboriously, and can do nothing else, while we find the other, whose eyes, hands, and powers of observation have been carefully exercised through various channels, doing them easily and intelligently.

He will then make progress so much more rapidly that in the same period spent at school there will be ample time to give him instruction of a wider kind or higher order, which may lay the foundation of really intelligent tastes for after years, while his companion is still struggling with the difficulties which perhaps at last prevent his passing the requisite standard before the overwhelming necessities of life call him to exclu-

sive manual toil. Even if the required point has been reached, the boy is in a state of intellectual destitution, that gives small hopes of his making any future use of his school acquirements. He has learned to read, but he has had no pleasure from knowledge. He has learned to write, but his hand is too stiff and clumsy to make the exercise anything but a laborious effort. He has learned to work rules of arithmetic, but he knows nothing of the relations of numbers, that give an interest to the dry cyphering. The possibility, as regards time, of including drawing in the elementary school course was a few months ago a matter of discussion at the London School Board, the difficulty already felt of meeting the legal requirements being strongly urged against such an addition. But Kinder-garten pupils would come to school with eyes and fingers already trained for drawing, and, as I said above, with so much facility for the usual lessons, that time may be spared for their other studies, bodily exercises, and manual arts, begun in the Kinder-garten, thus completing the scanty teaching of the elementary school. Under such a system the labourer's child would acquire, in addition to the usual school learning, such a foundation of drawing, geometry, and natural history, so much habit of observing nature, and of inquiring into what he observes, that his working life would begin from an altogether higher level of intelligence. What his hand has to do he will do with care and precision; what is before his eyes he will observe with accuracy and discrimination; and what amusements he seeks we may fairly hope will be beyond the pale of the public-house.

I have seemed here to speak of boys only, but of

course the advantage is the same to children of both sexes. The girls so trained will in like manner carry the benefit of that more complete development of natural faculty into the work of after years, and as mothers they will take a very different view of their office from that which the women of the lower classes generally take. Remembering how early their own education began, and round what little things it seemed to turn, they also will begin early, and observe little things, and recall the Kinder-garten songs as they watch the infant's cradle, and try to prepare it for the course of instruction which was so happy and so fruitful to themselves. The love of order and of beauty, which are such characteristic results of Kinder-garten education, will nowhere produce more important fruits than in the women, on whose care, and neatness, and regularity is due everything that raises the labouring man's home above the sleeping and feeding-place of the human animal.

And now, if we suppose that the boy or girl on leaving school goes to learn a trade or any industrial art, it seems almost superfluous to dwell upon the advantage of beginning the apprenticeship with such command of the bodily and mental instruments of labour as Kinder-garten instruction confers, with senses trained to accuracy, hands used to delicate operations, and the limbs to orderly and supple movements. It is evident that one so prepared would altogether distance another who has this necessary foundation of all careful workmanship to acquire. And as difficulties are lessened, the time required for learning a trade is diminished, wages may be earned at an earlier period, or leisure secured

for further instruction. Suppose, for instance, the boy entering a carpenter's shop for the first time, and bringing with him a habit of observing, measuring, and drawing lines and angles, and of working with his hands quickly and correctly, is it not evident how soon the use of tools will become easy to him? Suppose him or his sister entering a china factory with eyes used to distinguish form and colour, having learned something of drawing, perhaps of modelling, and being trained at any rate to be true and accurate in all their work, what progress will they make, as compared with others, to whom all this is unknown? Again, suppose they are employed in connection with machinery, what will not be the value of their early acquired habits of order, regularity, and precision? Or let us follow the young girl to a purely feminine trade—to dressmaking, for example—and see how quickly her habits of delicate handiwork and correct observation will come into play: how easily she will copy, how soon she will be fit to cut out, thanks to the childish exercises in accurate measurement, and use of the scissors in cutting out paper designs; or let us see her begin domestic service in common housework, where she will use her eyes and hands intelligently, and feel at once how economy, as well as beauty, depends on order and nicety; or in the kitchen, where again the disciplined accuracy in work, the hand skilled in various movements, and the intelligence trained to understand the meaning of each manual operation to be performed, will come in to lessen indefinitely the difficulties of the practical training, and perhaps in time to persuade the public that what stands in the way of our having good servants is

not popular education, but the want of education—that withholding knowledge will not increase the dexterity of the hand, nor give the qualities needed to direct it, and which belong only to carefully trained habits of observation and accuracy. It is easy to imagine that many persons will say the advocates of this system ride a hobby, and that the large results we anticipate will be nullified, as the results of other plans of education have again and again disappointed reformers. But the answer to this is twofold; first, no other system of nursery training is based on a philosophical study of human nature; secondly, all school systems neglect two or three years of child-life, which the Kinder-garten turns to account, and thus not only begin later, but begin when habits and inclinations are already in some measure formed, and probably hostile to those the educator wishes to train. It is not so much that other methods fail, as that we are inconsistent in our expectations—we hope to reap what we have never sown. Those ordinary school methods teach certain definite things, and must be judged according as they succeed in giving accurate knowledge of them, but they do not attempt to draw out all the faculties, or to take hold of the emotional and imaginative side of the child's nature; in short, the most complete instruction is not education, and the failures of the former cannot affect our estimate of the latter, which on any large scale has never even been tried. Now, Fröbel's system is education in the truest sense; to try it, therefore, is a new experiment in every way. It gives its most strenuous efforts to achieve those very things which ordinary methods neglect; it cares comparatively little for teaching, but

it strives to fashion the human creature so that it shall derive full benefit from all later teaching, whether of books or the experience of life; and, I repeat, that its value increases in proportion as that later teaching will be circumscribed. To the great mass of mankind, whose lives must be devoted to bread-winning labour, the period of mental training comes not again after childhood is closed—in truth, it comes not again to any of us, though we may strive by later culture to remedy the short-comings of early education. To the poor man those short-comings are final, and fatally do they help to hedge in his whole after-life within the circle of bodily necessities. Henceforth one influence only—that of the short Church services of one day in seven—makes any attempt to lift him above that circle, and this too often in so narrow a way that they appeal as little to his understanding, as the school-teaching appealed to his moral and imaginative faculties. Fröbel alone has worked out a system of education which, beginning from the very dawn of intelligence, makes the right use of the various faculties a second nature—works on the whole being, till the heart and intelligence expand together, and the disinherited of the earth are called to share in the spiritual inheritance of our common humanity, in those joys which make mental activity so far nobler a thing than a mere instrument of profit, and enable all to realise the words of Christ, that ‘man shall not live by bread alone,’ lifting him whatever his earthly station, to join his brethren in love for all that is great and beautiful in God’s world, and for Him as the Author of all.

SECTION VII.

Fröbel's Appeal to Women

FRÖBEL did not at once direct his attention to infant training. The Kinder-garten was the crowning work of a life devoted to the study of education, and to practical teaching. I may say in one sense that he went back step by step till he stood beside the infant's cradle. He was still a student at the University of Jena, when the state of society around him, the low condition—mental and physical—into which he felt that his country had fallen, forced upon him the conviction that only by the education of another generation on better principles with a freer and wider scope, morally and intellectually, and with more attention to the laws of physical development, could the nation be awakened to a higher and better life. This conviction was shared more or less by all the best men of Germany at that time ; and the half century that has elapsed since then has shown, by the immense progress made in those portions of culture that have been really cared for, what is the power of education when steadily wielded towards a given purpose.

But Fröbel did not desire the cultivation of any portion at the expense of the rest—the hothouse training of intelligence was not education to him ; and thus all the efforts made, and the improvement achieved, were still, in his view, stamped with imperfection. He did not complain of mere shortcomings in the results, such as we find in all human undertakings, but of radical imperfection of system ; and he had no peace

till, little by little, through the course of long laborious years, he had elaborated a new system, more in accordance with nature, and with man's mission upon earth.

Poverty having cut his own studies short, he accepted subordinate work in a school as a means of living. Thus apparent accident made a teacher of the man who, by the watch-fires of Germany's army of deliverance, as well as in his student's room at Jena, had dreamed of education as the salvation of his country. In his new vocation all his previous opinions were strengthened, and he longed for the opportunity of independent action. He took private pupils; he went with them to work under Pestalozzi, whose theories he had closely studied, and strengthened and enlarged his own principles by the study of the merits and defects of that great man's system. It is impossible here to follow his course in detail; as soon as he was able he established a school himself, hoping to work out his own theories; but the untrained condition of the boys who came to him, made his hopes nugatory. His pupils had little time left them beyond what was imperatively required to prepare them for the University; it was too late for that general training which, in his view, was so absolutely essential. Next, he hoped that better methods of teaching might attain his purpose, and he founded a school for teachers; and, aided by other eminent men, who enthusiastically followed his lead, he trained teachers, who afterwards did good service in the cause. But his own immediate difficulty remained the same. While all who came to be taught had so much to unlearn, time could never suffice for the necessary routine of acquisition, and the real work of education.

At last, his mind ever working upon this question, he reached the true solution. The right direction of the faculties must be given at the earliest dawn of life; the development, to be systematic and harmonious, must begin before neglect or over-stimulus had stunted some faculties, or given undue preponderance to others—before chance associations or habits had warped the course of infant growth. In a word, the child must be studied and trained from the cradle, if we would hope that school training should have due effect. Then would there be ample time for education in its fullest sense; and the making of the scholar would no longer interfere with the development of the human being. When once Fröbel had grasped this idea, the next step was clear. He turned from schoolmasters and professors to women. He called upon mothers to be no longer satisfied with the lower cares of motherhood, but to recognise the higher office laid upon them by Heaven—to remember that they were the spiritual mothers of the race, the educators for good, or for evil, of each new generation.

The effect was thrilling. Young mothers came for counsel and direction, childless widows and unmarried women devoted themselves unselfishly to the cause which he preached, as that of the nation, that of humanity. He worked out gradually his system of infant training, and established the first Kinder-garten in a retired village, and taught in it himself, becoming the very idol of the children. Many women came to work there under his direction; they were of all ranks and ages, the young girl, and the woman rich in the experience of life, or worn by its toils and cares. All alike bowed before his lofty teaching, and felt the spell of his earnest

simplicity. From this centre, knowledge of the new system spread with varied success. I cannot here follow its chequered history, nor trace the causes that have hindered till now its full development. One name only now must be mentioned, that of Baroness von Marenholtz Bülow, whose work has been so often referred to in these pages. She was among Fröbel's earliest disciples, and since his death has for years devoted her great talents to the advocacy of his views, preaching them from land to land, till she awakened the interest of lovers of education in France, England, Italy, and America, as well as in Germany.

England, as might have been expected from the national distrust of foreign ways and of new theories, has been the most backward in adopting the system ; though even among us some admirable Kinder-gartens have for years been established. The time is now come, however, when a new impulse may, I hope, be given to the movement ;* and simultaneously with this must be echoed Fröbel's appeal to women, on the response to which its real success must depend ; for it is not enough to establish the system in schools : it must be received in our homes and nurseries, if it is to produce a wide harvest of good. Now, then, when women are asking for education and eager for work, the moment seems favourable for placing before them an object which will require the best culture they can obtain, and give the noblest direction to their powers.

* The above was written soon after the foundation of the Fröbel Society. Now, after five years' work, we again hope that a new impulse will be given by the London Training College for Kinder-garten teachers founded by the Society.

Of course it will be said in answer that all women do not care for children, that all will not become mothers, that wider paths are now open, requiring different studies; and all this may be granted, and the advantage of a variety of interests and pursuits fully recognised, and yet the fact remains that for the majority of women—if, indeed, I may not say for all—the care of children enters more or less into their lives. Even those who never become mothers are continually, for one reason or another, forced to assume the care of a family, though they may not win either the joy or the reward. This general fact depends not on social arrangement or conventional laws, but on the constitution of nature; and thus we may be certain that whatever outward paths may finally be cleared for women, who from choice or necessity turn from home to the world, those who follow them exclusively will, as compared with the whole, still be the exceptions only; while home duties and responsibilities will absorb the energies of the sex in general, as they have done hitherto. The real question at issue is, whether, as hitherto, they shall continue to be assumed in ignorance of their true scope and importance.

When we come to inquire what studies may be called essential to women, we find that foremost among them stands that of education, considered practically and philosophically; and since no method of early education is comparable with that of Fröbel for the breadth of its principles and the comprehensiveness of its aims, we should desire to see every young woman, without exception of rank or immediate destination, go through a course of *Kinder-garten* training, including, in the educated classes, the study of the principles and the

philosophy of the method. Even young girls who are destined for some professional or industrial calling will be aided rather than hindered by the additional previous culture thus obtained. A woman seriously trained for her vocation of education will enter upon any other calling with a clear and cultivated understanding, with carefully trained habits of observation and reasoning, with sound knowledge of the first principles of physical science, with attention turned to the study of character which gives facility for living and working among others, and, above all, with the sense that life must be regulated by duty; and, thus provided, we need not fear that she should find herself at a disadvantage among her competitors.

No one has advocated more earnestly than myself the absolute mental freedom of women, their indefeasible right, as human beings, to devote their faculties to any subject which most attracts them, to spend their energy in any direction that promises most enjoyment or advantage, within the bounds that every moral being must respect; but Nature lays some special duties upon each sex, and duties take precedence of privileges. Many a service of peril lays a heavy claim upon men, from which women are exempt; and in the same way the care of the young lays a paramount claim upon the latter, which Nature binds every woman to acknowledge and prepare herself to discharge fully and faithfully. The man who in the hour of danger should declare himself unfit to aid in the defence of his country would not be more deaf to patriotism and religion, than the woman to whom the intelligent care of children remained strange or unknown.

This universal training of women in the principles of true infant education is most earnestly advocated by Madame von Marenholtz Bülow. She gives the various periods she considers necessary for the various degrees of instruction different classes might be able to acquire, or which would be needed for different positions of responsibility. She considers that for those who intend to take up the employment professionally, a year is the shortest time that should be given to the study of the system, practically and theoretically, while an additional year of probation as an assistant is further requisite to fit any one to become directress of a Kinder-garten. The shorter period of study that has often been thought sufficient, and the consequent superficial knowledge of principles in many teachers, has been, in her opinion, the cause of the slow progress the method has made. Educated women wishing to prepare themselves generally for possible future duties require the same extent of theoretical study, but not the same time to be spent in practical exercise. Next, for women who intend to become nursery governesses (*bonnes d'enfants*), working under a mother's direction, a shorter period of preparation may suffice; the philosophical study may be abridged, while they are well grounded in first principles, and in the practical part of the system. And, lastly, nursery-maids would only be required to be acquainted with the latter, possessing only those first elements of knowledge without which even the earliest games could not be taught to little children, bringing with them that tender reverence for childhood which is inspired by Fröbel's method, and which will at least make them feel the danger of

ignorance in their treatment either of mind or body. When we consider the coarse material out of which we make nursery-maids now, it needs no words to show what advantages would accrue from this degree of instruction given to all the women of the working classes. We need not be told that such a thing is impossible at present ; in unfolding the plan for a great reform, we necessarily project ourselves into the future. But that future, and not, I trust, a distant one, will see these schools greatly multiplied, and gradually brought within the reach of all. Even now, women who have leisure to study, may acquaint themselves with the theory and philosophy of the subject, and may with little trouble watch its application in some of the existing Kinder-gartens. Later, girls whether educated at home or at school will be able to go through their regular course of instruction without difficulty. If in town, a Kinder-garten will be found attached to every large school which now receives a class of young children ; if in the country, there would be the Kinder-garten attached to the elementary schools ; which, whether in town or country, would likewise afford the means of instruction for girls of the working classes.

It will only require a little perseverance, perhaps some reward or distinction, to induce mothers of those classes to send their daughters for a few hours a-week to the Kinder-garten ; they would soon be encouraged to do so by the benefits that would accrue to themselves, either in the superior help girls so trained would give in the care of younger children, or of the household generally, or in the better wages they would

receive if they go to service; for we may suppose that it would soon become a settled custom to take as nursery-maids only girls so instructed. Lastly, when—as I trust will happen—Fröbel's method is adopted universally as the foundation of education for all classes, then women, having been trained themselves as children in the Kinder-garten, will learn with far greater facility, both the practice and the theory; the former will be outwardly familiar, the latter will be more easily apprehended by minds whose own culture has been systematically grounded. Thus, as time goes on, a reform, the ultimate consequence of which we are unable to calculate, will be more and more facilitated and accelerated.

That the wide adoption of these schools will make a very large demand for women's labour is evident, and that the serious study they will require will raise the popular estimation of women's natural vocation is certain. Few things have so much contributed to foster the generally contemptuous opinion of woman's capacity, as the frivolous and ignorant view taken of her share in the work of the race. To men seems to fall naturally all important labour in the State, to women only household care and the rearing of children. But when the care of children shall be recognised in its true light, it will be seen that no labour for the State exceeds, if any equals in importance, that which women have thus laid upon them.

It is not, then, as to an inferior part in the social division of labours, nor necessarily to an exclusive task, that we call women, in urging upon them all to make education their first study. Far from it, we call them

to a task that underlies all others, but excludes none, while it opens to women a region of influence and powers so great and far-reaching that it has been made the battle-field of statesmen and Jesuits for generations. In the history of that long struggle between Church and State for the control of Education, women may learn to measure the power that is theirs, independent alike of Church or State decrees, and which their own feebleness or ignorance can alone curtail or pervert.

And the more they realise this fact, the greater will be their gratitude to Fröbel, who was the first to proclaim, upon national grounds, this supreme importance of women's mission, and to call upon them, in the name of God and humanity, to undertake that deepest and most searching of social reforms which begins at the infant's cradle, and on which must ultimately rest all our hopes of a better future for the race.







HIGHER EDUCATION OF WOMEN.*

[THE term "higher education" is much in use at present, and seems in different quarters to indicate such different meanings, that I will at once state that in using it myself I mean simply the education that follows that of school. Higher instruction would be, of course, the right expression, if it were possible in English to preserve the proper distinction between those terms, the confused use of which is at the root of so much confusion in our views of the whole subject. Higher instruction is the course of study pursued after the preparatory studies of school time are completed; higher education would in its full meaning comprise these, as part of the means of that self-culture which begins when childish trammels are cast off, to end only when the uses of this world have trained the immortal spirit for higher work in some yet unknown region.

The only use of dwelling on the distinction here, is lest it should be imagined by some that the term *finished*, which has been ridiculed, as applied to school studies, could perhaps belong to higher education.

There is a great danger in seeking to reform so defective a method of instruction as that which has prevailed for girls, lest the attempt should be made to enlarge the curriculum too much, an attempt which would inevitably lead us back to superficiality and want of thoroughness. The one aim of school teaching should

* What is between brackets is added to the original papers.

be to discipline the faculties for future use, and to do so by means of such a thorough groundwork of instruction in subjects considered important, that the portals of real knowledge may be open for wider search in any direction in which the scholars may be impelled hereafter to turn. For instance, mathematics, history, science, which figure grandly on the prospectus of schools, are mere delusive names if any serious study of these subjects is supposed to be made; but they stand for something very real if the school course gives concerning them such a perfect hold upon principles, such familiar acquaintance with outline, that the pupil knows accurately *where* he stands, how to advance farther, how large is the field beyond him, and what is the direction he must take if he would explore any portion of it.

The wide extension of classes for ladies within the last few years, gives satisfactory evidence that we are gradually growing out of that disastrous notion that the close of school life is the close of study; that there is no purpose for women in knowledge, and, therefore, that school-girl acquisitions suffice to furnish them forth for life. The University local examinations have done great service to women in enforcing the recognition of the difference between school lessons, and higher culture. The threefold series of Cambridge examinations point to three stages: the elementary and the more advanced school studies up to eighteen years of age, and the higher examination open to men and women after eighteen, to which corresponds the London University examination for women, lately placed on exactly the same footing as the matriculation examination for men.

Thus the principle has been proclaimed by the highest educational authorities in the country that education does not close at eighteen for women any more than for men. We are a long way yet from the universal acceptance of this fact, or of any practical course founded upon it; but the necessities of life forcing many women to more serious study than heretofore, their example is not without its influence; and everyday difficulties are lessened, and prejudices softened, which formerly raised formidable barriers against the efforts of educators. Hence the rapid spread of the classes above mentioned; concerning which the only criticism I should be disposed to make is, that they have, generally speaking, been somewhat desultory, that they have not drawn the line I should wish to draw between the essential, and what may be left to individual taste. A guiding thread, a link of purpose in our studies, which groups them round one centre, gives them stability and coherence, and the tone of the culture is higher than when it is composed of here a little and there a little, gathered as fancy impels in different directions. In building up our intellectual structure, we have three distinct stages to go through: first, the foundation to be laid, and the capacity for work to be acquired, and this belongs to school discipline; secondly, to acquire what is essential for our distinct duties in life; thirdly, to exercise free choice in gratifying to the utmost whatever love of knowledge we are fortunate enough to possess. When we depart widely from this order, we introduce confusion and lose all method in our culture. In former views of girls' education, no such order was ever dreamed of, and

now, in our haste to shake off the old ignorance, we are too apt to overlook method and purpose for the sake of varied acquirements.

My object then in the following pages is to dwell upon this distinction between the essentials, corresponding to professional education ; and the non-essential that can be left to individual choice and capacity, and whose range may indeed be co-extensive with the whole field of human knowledge. Let us then try to ascertain what is really indispensable for the education of women.

Considered in this light, three subjects stand out prominently—human physiology, mental and moral philosophy, and political, or, as I may prefer to call it, social economy. These are the three subjects without some knowledge of which no woman is fully furnished for the duties of life, and they are subjects which in my opinion are distinctly beyond the school curriculum, except in the barest elements. If it were my province to speak of the education of men, I might prove that the same knowledge given to them would tend to rectify some terrible evils, under which the world has suffered from generation to generation ; but what makes it indispensable to women is, that the welfare of childhood and the comfort of households must rest in their hands, and will be cared for only in some haphazard fashion without that knowledge of the conditions of physical health, of mental health, and of the health of society, which is acquired by means of the three studies above named. It is evident that taking this kind of practical view of any subject, it is elementary knowledge only that is implied. I am asking no such obvious impossibility as that all well-educated women should be thorough

political economists, or philosophers, or physiologists; but only that they should know enough to act safely within the limits of educational work and of ordinary social relations, in which the principles of those sciences are the only safe guides,—enough, especially, to distrust ignorance, and to know when their own knowledge fails.

If it be objected that all women will not be mothers and mistresses of households, I reply—as I have often replied before—that exceptions cannot be taken into account in discussing general principles. Few women—probably none—begin life deliberately intending not to marry: I should be truly sorry for those who did so. The determination would indicate a nature so poor in its sympathies of heart and mind as not to feel the joys and responsibilities of that fuller existence that is bound up in the strongest of human ties; or it would point to a youth so saddened by home misery as to have formed the stern resolve never to accept a yoke which can become so crushing to all that makes life dignified or happy. But, thank God, both these cases are rare; utterly cold natures are singular exceptions, and early experience of misery at home more often unfortunately drives girls to accept the first offer of marriage that takes them from the evils they do know, to brave in ignorant self-confidence the untried evils of the future. Few, then, are the women who determinately shut themselves out from the ordinary duties of their sex, and of the large number who for various reasons of a different kind remain single, how many do we find who, at one time or other of their lives, are called upon to undertake family cares and responsibilities, though excluded from the rights and the joys that should accompany them, to

supplement the failing strength of others, to raise in one way or another the burden that has fallen from feeble or more careless hands. Certainly the cases are numerous enough to warrant the assertion that with few exceptions all women are more or less concerned in the management of children and of household affairs, and therefore that all subjects necessary to be learned to make that management wise and thorough are indispensable subjects for the higher education of girls.

First, then, as regards Physiology. It strikes a mind that has any notion of the difference between certainty and uncertainty, between knowledge and ignorance, as something not only strange, but awful, that the health of children should be trusted to women who are absolutely ignorant of the mechanism of those delicate frames, of the nature of the organs whose right action is life, whose impeded, faltering action is worse than death, since it may continue through years of that dire form of human misery called delicate health, destroying enjoyment, lessening usefulness, adding weight to every burden, a darker shadow to every care. Yet so fearful a calamity may result, and does result in numberless instances, from the ignorance of mothers. This subject was admirably treated in a little book written nearly forty years ago, by Dr Andrew Combe;* but in this age of much writing and rapid reading wise words are soon forgotten; a generation has passed away since Dr Combe wrote, and till very lately we have still been asking whether young women should be taught physiology. In every illness the best physician will be the readiest

* Physiology applied to Health and Education.

to acknowledge the assistance given by skilful nursing, and accordingly nursing is an important part of the practical application of the knowledge we contend for, and should be systematically taught to every woman; but if nursing is valuable in illness, the same intelligent care is no less needful to prevent illness. Nursing deals with one definite state of things, and careful attention to a limited range of facts is sufficient to enable us to assist the physician's treatment, or to clear away impediments to the restorative action of the great physician *Nature*; but in ordinary life the conditions are far more complicated. We believe things are going right because the elements of evil are hidden. The nature and functions of the great organs being unknown, the conditions under which the functions are healthily carried out are unknown also. If we do not know the proper normal state, neither can we detect the abnormal. Much is said and written in these days about hygiene, but unless it is treated as a part of applied physiology, it is a mere set of rules; science debased to routine from want of knowing the principle on which it rests. Just as schoolmasters undertake to educate without any study of the nature and action of the human mind, so mothers undertake the care of health without knowing the A B C of the conditions on which health depends; for such knowledge can be acquired by a study of physiology alone. A few empirical laws about pure air and wholesome food may be learned easily, but what it is in the structure of the lungs and the heart that make certain qualities of the air hurtful or the reverse,—what the digestive organs require from the daily food in order to nourish and repair, and to send a pure and vigorous

current of blood through the frame,—what care is needed to keep the action of the brain clear and healthy, to maintain that balance of physical and mental activity on which harmonious development depends, these things can be known only by special study. And it is this study which I have here placed first in my list of subjects indispensable for the higher education of women; not because it can claim priority over subjects that relate to mental and moral health, but because it comes first in point of time among the mother's cares and responsibilities, and that it bears directly on the work of life for all, whether mothers or not.

For obvious reasons, greater difficulties attend the study of physiology for young women than perhaps that of any other subject, and till comparatively lately the desired knowledge could in most cases be obtained from books alone, and received therefore no aid from demonstration. Now these obstacles are in great measure overcome, the value of the study is daily rising in public estimation; and in London at any rate lectures on Physiology* can be attended without difficulty, while elementary works of a high character are within the student's reach.

And now supposing a young woman to have gone through such a course of study, it remains for her to learn something of the practical applications of the physiological knowledge she has acquired. She is no longer in ignorance of the great principles on which organic life depends, nor of the structure of that frame "so fearfully and wonderfully made," the consideration

* See Calendar of Classes open to Women in London, published monthly in the *Women's Education Journal*.

of which deepened in the mind of the Psalmist his sense of awe and reverence for God. Blunders such as the ignorant fall into every day, and by which they undermine their own health and imperil that of the hapless children depending on their care, would be, it is hoped, impossible for them; but there is a wide difference between such general application of principles and the skilful ordering of minute daily trifles in obedience to them, which is essential to prevent illness, or to assist in restoring health. Scientific study does not aim at giving a knowledge of practical details, and a great deal of mere necessary common-place information must come in to guide us here, which would be totally out of place in a lecture-room. The essential principles of good sanitary conditions are easily deduced from physiology; but to bring our knowledge to bear in our own households, much special acquaintance with methods of ventilating and cleansing within and without our walls is indispensable, and requires to be practically studied; and no person is fit to have the management of a household, and, therefore to be responsible for its general health, as far as local influences are concerned, who has not so studied this important question. This, like some other portions of the argument of these papers, may seem in contradiction with the ordinary practice of life—with the marriages out of the school-room that we daily see, the child of yesterday placed in a position of trust and responsibility to-morrow; but the contradiction, I venture to assert, tells against the marriages, not against the studies I urge as the technical training for any such position.

I believe that the most thorough mode of studying

practically the difficult subject we are considering is by attendance in a hospital. A mother who has been thoroughly trained herself, and must have gained largely through her varied experience of her own family cares, could of course give much valuable instruction to her daughter ; and, if this were seriously done, it might be in some measure a substitute for the more systematic instruction of hospital practice. Still, where the latter is attainable, there can be no doubt that knowledge may be acquired there in a few months or weeks, which it might be years before home experience afforded the opportunity of learning. It is quite clear that whatever else women do from choice or necessity in this busy world, the internal economy of our homes and the care of the sick must fall to them. Nursing has in all times been a feminine calling, and for that reason probably supposed to require no knowledge. The religious devotion of Catholic sisterhoods first showed a better example, and, for some years past, great efforts have been made to raise that invaluable art out of the contemptible condition into which it had fallen. What we owe in this respect to Miss Nightingale it needs no words of mine to point out, and I cannot do better than direct attention to her "Notes on Nursing" to show what I mean by the practical study I wish to recommend. For nursing, all the ordinary precautions about ventilation and cleanliness are carried to their furthest extreme, and it is thus that their habitual ordinary value is best illustrated : and for this reason, a hospital where these things are systematically and permanently attended to upon scientific principles, is the best school for learning them.

In the same manner, although painful experience trains any thoughtful person into a good nurse at home, the first patients suffer while the experience is slowly gathered, and, after all, the field is a narrow one; the appearance of some new form of illness, or some accident calling for precautions different from any we have been obliged to use before, makes us feel very helpless at a moment when helplessness is a heavy addition to our cares. The wide practice of a hospital teaches more of these things in a few weeks than home experience in as many years, and it gives the knowledge before it is needed for use, before we have felt our heart ready to break, as we stood ignorant and incapable in sight of the suffering of one we love. All the skilful modes of moving a sick person, of bed-making, and other forms of personal attendance under the difficulties of serious illness—the best position for a patient under given circumstances (a matter which after an accident is often of supreme importance)—the minute care about medicines—the mode of preparing and applying external remedies—the preparation of sick-room food; all these are learnt in the best way in a hospital, because they are seen in regular operation, and above all, perhaps, because the mind is free to learn while the heart is not wrung with home affliction.

The mere orderly ways of professional nursing carried into home practice would make a difference of the most important kind. To know what to leave undone is often as important as to know what to do, and how much fuss, and hurry, and vain expenditure of labour and exertion are saved thereby! The thorough study of nursing so as to be fit for a responsible office is a long

and serious one, and obviously not to be undertaken by all ; but such a study as would enable young women to enforce the practical application of the principles they have learnt, that would enable them to watch all light home cases with intelligence, and to know (no slight thing) when higher skill is required ; which would give them practical knowledge of the best conditions for baffling disease, all this might be learnt by a person duly prepared in the course of two or three months' attendance at a hospital, and we may be certain that time so spent will never be regretted.

Whatever the task future life may bring, whether the care of infancy or of old age, or nursing through some fearful period when an epidemic has invaded an otherwise healthy household, the woman so instructed will look back with thankfulness to the training which has doubled her usefulness in time of need. No one denies the duty or doubts its importance ; only according to the characteristic method of viewing matters connected with women, they are expected to *know* when their knowledge is wanted, but not *to be taught*.

II. MENTAL PHILOSOPHY

The second subject on our list of essentials for the Higher Education of Women is Mental Philosophy. The words may sound alarming to many, and when we remember that they might cover the whole ground of Ethics and Métaphysics, we may partly excuse the alarm ; but though I use the term because it rightly designates the study I recommended, it is only a por-

tion of it that can be called essential, or that minds not naturally metaphysical can be expected to enter into. Shakespeare distinguishes man as "looking before and after," and doubtless these faculties of memory and forethought are among the foremost of essentially human gifts. But man also looks within; consciousness, that may also be called the birth of the divine, in the race so nearly allied to lower species, is hardly awakened before the strange world of self, so distinct from the other strange world around, attracts attention; and in proportion to the reflective power of each mind, it becomes more and more a subject of study, a groundwork of self-improvement.

To each one of us, then, the science that deals with the peculiarities of our mental organisation, that systematizes the observations founded on our own consciousness, and shows their connection and their tendencies, is a study of great importance; but to those who undertake the work of education it is indispensable, and therefore must be so to women, the educators of the race by right divine.

Of all earthly sights none so carry us beyond the sphere of the present, to the infinite, the ideal, the immortal, as the lifeless form resting in the first solemn beauty of Death, and the infant sleeping in the cradle. All human possibilities rush through the mind, and almost overpower us as we gaze on one or the other. There the toil, the joy, the wrong-doing, the victory, are all over, secured or missed in this life for ever. Here all that may make life a blessing or a curse, all that may link it to the angels, or to the lower animals, whose appetites it will share—all lies folded in uncon-

scious helplessness. The whole passage from the one to the other is what education must influence and direct. It is that helplessness we have to help, that unconsciousness we must assist to transform into the fulness of mental life. But how shall this be done if we have no distinct aim, no knowledge of the processes to be used, of the powers we may call up to aid us? Truly the mental, like the bodily faculties, will develop and acquire strength according to certain natural laws of growth; but just as in the course of that development many a slight bodily infirmity becomes illness from neglect, many a delicate frame is crippled through ignorant treatment, so with the mind; tendencies that might have been the seeds of virtue, become fruitful of evil; association and habit, the educator's all-powerful allies, make after-education well-nigh impossible when allowed to sway in childhood, undirected or misdirected; the conscience, the moral-law giver, assumes no empire, because no care has made the inner voice distinct, and caused the faint lines in which the law of duty is written on every human heart, to stand forth bold and clear when brought out by the light of truth and knowledge, as the words traced in invisible ink seem to start to life when the rays of heat fall upon them.

The study here urged as essential to all women is that which will give this directing power; which will enable them to detect mental symptoms as they should detect symptoms of physical disturbance, to read tendencies and know how to strengthen or counteract them, to cultivate the will and discipline it to obedience, first to a wiser human will, later to the voice of conscience speaking the will of the Highest; to take

care that authority should not cramp, that freedom should not become lawless, that the powerful chain of association should be so forged link by link, that each should strengthen the other and give security to future endeavours; that the mighty sway of habit should be so controlled that it may become, not a tyrant mastering freer aspiration, but a minister to lessen the toil and overcome the difficulties of life; that childish observation and curiosity may be made to bear their natural fruit of love of knowledge and intelligent interest in the world around; that the strong affections in which infant life is cradled, should become the type of Divine love, parental rule the earthly voice of the Father in Heaven;—this is the task for which every woman must fit herself, if she would not perhaps some day rue with bitter self-accusation her unfitness for the office to which Nature herself has called her.

I know that many will be inclined to smile at any philosophical view of the mother's early training, and think that it may be trusted to love and common sense. Unfortunately that trust in common sense is always the refuge of those who find it inconvenient to acquire knowledge. We never find, as Whately puts it, that the seamen believe common sense will suffice to steer a ship, or that the cook admits the power of common sense to make a pudding; and so on through all the range of human action, those who know contend for knowledge; those who are ignorant put in the lazy claim for common sense. Love, doubtless, has a power of its own, for, if very strong, it intensifies observation on all that relates to the loved object, and thus far increases knowledge; but till we find the physician

acknowledging that maternal love will suffice to combat disease, or to ward off constitutional peril, we see no grounds for expecting that the same love will be more powerful in the task of securing the healthy balance of the moral and intellectual nature.

Another refuge of those who oppose these views is to banish mental training till school life begins—in other words, they would spend the first nine or ten years in preparing new difficulties for the next ten. I shall enter* more fully into this subject when I come to consider the Kinder-garten system, the only philosophical method of early education; here we are only pointing out the grounds on which we base our proposition of the indispensable necessity of the study of mental philosophy to women; in other words, the study of the moral and intellectual faculties that it must be their task first to train for the duties and work of life. If, as I before said, the mere teacher can do only half his work when devoid of this knowledge, how much more does she require it who must educate as well as teach, mould the life as well as direct the outward routine.

And now, just as I spoke of the training needed to make a study of physiology serve its practical purpose in such matters as the superintendence of sanitary arrangements and the care of the sick, so here we have to consider the mode of bringing the principles of psychology learnt in books to bear upon the practical work of education. We cannot say of either of these great subjects that their practical purpose gives them

* This section was originally published before the Kinder-garten series, which comes first in this volume.

their highest interest to the student. The metaphysician and the biologist may never be called upon to bring a single law of either science to bear in actual dealing with their fellow-creatures, while the engrossing interest of the speculation remains the same; but to society the practical application is of the highest importance, and the most essential duties of woman's natural vocation depend on her being able to apply them rightly and intelligently. It is not enough to one who may have the whole welfare of a helpless child cast into her hands, to read about the intellectual and moral faculties of man. She must learn to watch the early manifestations of such faculties, and to use each resource that the mental nature affords, to direct and control, to plant and to weed out, to form links for future action, to preserve freedom in the midst of protecting care. Infinite pains, infinite patience, minute observation and careful regard for the future in the midst of the difficulties of the present, all these are wanted; and it may be said that they are easiest acquired and practised when to all other things is added the infinite love which in the mother destroys the feeling of weariness or disgust. In one sense this is true, and to that love is it due that, in spite of unfathomable ignorance, much has been done; but some early practice before the heart is interested, leaves in this case, as in that of nursing, the intellect more free and active to acquire knowledge; and, so far as there is any truth in what we hear so often said, that mothers are not the best teachers of their own children, it is because too-anxious affection troubles the judgment. There is an intense wish to do right, with a sense of ignorance and a recognition of

frequent failure, which the ignorance is just as likely to exaggerate as to lessen; and should some little excitement or undue emotion follow, these quickly tell upon the child, and every difficulty is increased. Then friends repeat, 'Mothers cannot teach,' while the truth is only, that inexperienced teachers cannot do good work any more than inexperienced cooks, or inexperienced statesmen. So, as the first patients suffer while self-taught experience is gathered in the sick-room, elder children suffer while wisdom is painfully learnt for the benefit of the younger. But this need not be so if education were kept seriously before the eyes of young women as a work they must fit themselves for; and if, in order to that fitness, they not only made some study of mental philosophy, but also watched the practical application of the laws and principles of the science in the actual work of education. No better mode of doing this for their special purpose could probably be found than by going through a course of training in a Kinder-garten school, where the early age of the pupils obliges the teachers to go to first principles, and gives the actual experience which the future mother will first need herself.

In the working of more advanced schools, though an immense deal might be learned, supposing the teaching to be really good, yet the instruction which, for various reasons not strictly educational, must then be given, is no longer so favourable to the special object we have in view; and the intellectual is almost always more prominent than the moral discipline, thus so far causing a break in the true harmony of education. Now with the infant pupils of the Kinder-garten neither of these

difficulties exists. The knowledge given has one sole purpose, that of training the feeble effort to learn. The discipline must be moral, for the moral nature is the more developed at that age, and without appealing to that no effort of the budding intelligence would be made at all. A school-boy, though he is in a state of sulkiness or other ill-temper, or though he hates his teacher, or thinks himself unjustly treated, may see that it is to his interest to learn his lesson, but a little child is simply unable under such circumstances to do so. If the moral atmosphere be disturbed, he cannot reason himself into action, and he does not work at all. Thus the most important principles of a mother's teaching are imperatively acted upon in the Kinder-garten, and that invaluable secret of true education, preserving the harmonious balance of the faculties, is revealed to the young teacher.

Fröbel's system has not as yet taken the place it deserves in England, and therefore when we speak of a Kinder-garten many people think only of the boxes of toys they have perhaps bought and found of little use, not dreaming that the failure was in their own mode of using the instruments, without learning the principle they involved. The question, however, is not whether the Kinder-garten games are the best that could have been devised, but that no other system of early education has ever been scientifically grounded. I might say that no other system of education at all has ever been worked out both morally and intellectually, on scientific principles; but, at any rate, the early education is the best for study. Learning to begin in the right track is that which is so unspeakably important, not only for its present results,

but for the saving of after-labour ; and is, I must once more repeat, the very work that most concerns women socially and professionally. It is this moulding of the whole nature in its earliest development which must be done by them or be left undone, and it is this which young women would learn by attending a Kinder-garten better than by any reading, although the reading ought by no means to be omitted. Even should they not afterwards follow the exact practice, they will have had their eyes open to the importance of many things which they had never dreamed of before. When it is seen how carefully and how philosophically Fröbel's system is directed to make all the natural activity of the child conduce to an educational purpose, how simply the germ of the qualities we most need to cultivate—of observation, love of knowledge, industry—is trained out of the child's curiosity about external things and wish to exercise its own activity, it will be acknowledged that to all who may have the care of children laid upon them as the highest duty and responsibility of their lives, some time spent in the Kinder-garten will be worth a much longer period spent over books ; or rather that what the latter can teach will be likely to bear more valuable fruit for being tested and practised in the former.

Nor let it be supposed that the time so spent will be wasted, even should no after-practice of the system ever be required. Various acquirements that are indispensable to the Kinder-garten teacher, such as perfect familiarity with the early portions of geometry, knowledge of natural objects, and of the first principles of natural science, and of arts and manufactures, so as to be able to explain and illustrate them, the familiar

practice of certain forms of drawing, and, above all, the habit of analyzing mental operations and of following the logical sequence of the whole method, will be found rich in future utility, even should the student never have occasion to devote another hour to the labour of education. The process by which she will have learnt to train the observing and reasoning faculties of young children will assuredly have strengthened her own, while the practical application of principles of psychology must be full of interest and instruction to every human being, whatever the after-course of their lives.

3. SOCIAL ECONOMY

'The third subject pointed out as 'indispensable for the higher education of women,' was political, or, as it is frequently termed now, social economy. The latter name is in several respects perhaps the best ; it points to the wide range of interest that should come under consideration, and thus indicates at once that higher ground is taken than that of the mere profit-and-loss views which have too often given a hard and narrow aspect to economical doctrines. The only objection to the new name is that it seems to be used almost exclusively when women are addressed, while men pursue their study, and the great masters write under the old title of political economy. If, therefore, this change is a euphuism, an attempted disguise in order to present a serious study *sub rosa* to women, I, for one, would repudiate the term, not only from a general dislike to all special adaptation of subjects for women, but also because political subjects are among those to which it is

peculiarly desirable to turn their attention more than it ever has been turned hitherto. Any avoidance of the term 'political,' for the sake of soothing prejudice, would therefore not only be weak, but wrong. But having made this protest, it is time to see what are the practical reasons that make this branch of the new science of sociology so indispensable for the higher education of women. These are to be found, first, in their position, as rulers of households and controllers of family expenditure ; secondly, in their frequent intercourse with the poor ; thirdly, in their indirect influence on public questions.

A woman, whether married or single, who has the management of a household thrown upon her hands, becomes an employer of labour, and the questions which on a large scale threaten the peace of society, affect, in one shape or another, the well-being of every home. She spends money for the advantage of others, and if in a position to spend largely, her example will tell favourably or unfavourably upon those ever-recurring questions of allowable or criminal luxury, of remunerative or unremunerative expenditure, of the real character of saving and of extravagance ; and the habits formed by young people growing up under her guidance in right or wrong associations on those points, will affect the whole tenor of their lives and their subsequent influence on society. It is futile, indeed, to imagine that it suffices for a father to be wise on subjects such as these ; if he be counteracted by the ignorance or the frivolous habits of the mother, his views will go for very little. They may be recalled in later years, but the opinion that will have the strength of motive in early youth will

be that which, bound up with feeling, as home-bred opinions generally are, has grown up insensibly from a powerful association almost unconsciously formed. Right or wrong, for good or for evil, mothers do so form associations which connect action in such matters with duty, or with pleasure, with the habit of seeking the right path, or of indolently acquiescing in prevailing custom; and it is because they do so that it would be hard to calculate how far the national life of England has been impoverished by women's ignorance of matters affecting the public welfare. The second consideration that makes political economy of great importance to women is that its doctrines affect the whole subject of charities, our dealings with the poor and the labouring classes generally. Women are all, more or less, occupied with such questions; many, such as clergymen's wives, bringing their influence to bear upon them daily in a position of quasi authority; but if left to deal ignorantly with them, they must do mischief—social mischief, in spreading and rooting the evils our better knowledge is striving to eradicate—religious mischief, by bringing down upon the great Christian virtue of charity the scorn of those who hold scientific truth. When women shall have mastered the needful worldly knowledge, they may find it to be their mission to show forth how such knowledge can be made to help the work laid upon the disciples of Him who 'went about doing good.'

An enormous proportion of the voluntary labour done among the poor is done by women, and it would seem almost absurd even to ask if it can be supposed that the same zeal, applied upon right principles, and with that order and method that belong to well-instructed

minds, would not produce a very different effect from that which we generally behold. Women are less amenable to the influence of superior knowledge in this matter than they are to the common-place clerical influence, because the latter appeals to feelings which they do understand, while the former appeals to a range of ideas unfamiliar to them. Knowledge is valued by those who have knowledge enough to see why it should hold sway; while ignorance is stubborn, simply because it is ignorant. Yet people continually wonder that those who know nothing should not recognise that great principle of the rightful sway of wisdom.

The combined ignorance and mistaken piety of our fathers formerly brought the labouring population of England nigh to a state of general pauperism, and the same causes still combine to perpetuate in some measure the same evils. Indolent philanthropists, clergymen, and women acting under their influence, are those who continually place hindrances in the way of a more healthy state of things.

In the early days of Romanist corruption, almsgiving was preached as an easy substitute for Christian morals; in these latter days it is still commended as Christian charity; and the efforts of those who would introduce a better system are denounced and often frustrated on the authority of Scripture texts applying to a wholly different condition of society. Yet, if ever the nation is to be taught thrift and independence—in other words, is to be raised from a degraded to a comparatively moral condition—it will be thanks to the disciples of that economic science which has been condemned as teaching harshness to the poor and forgetfulness of

duty to the rich. Study of the real principles of the science will make evident how much remains to be done by individual effort in the truest spirit of charity among our more ignorant brethren; how much educated women especially, in going among the poor, can do to lessen their ignorance on these matters, to remove the feeling that such dealings are dictated by harshness, to teach the women of the working classes, and through them to influence the men. How much might be done in this manner towards increasing savings and diminishing strikes it is difficult to estimate; and when any subject is of such wide application that to have due influence it needs to take root at home, we may rest assured that it is only through the instrumentality of women we shall attain the purpose.

The widest application of sound doctrines on these subjects has been that worked out by the Charity Organization Society; and if women wish to learn what may be done by ardent charity rightly directed, let them inquire into the labour of Miss Octavia Hill; see foul dens turned into healthy homes, a pauper population raised to honest independence, by the combination (alas! so rare) of true philanthropy and true knowledge, in her who was at once their teacher and their practical helper.

The success that has attended the efforts of the ladies who, in connection with the Yorkshire Board of Education, have lectured to poor women on domestic economy and the laws of health as applied to the care of dwellings and of children, affords another example of what we may hope to see accomplished when sound knowledge shall enlighten the charity in which women have

never been defective. Hundreds of poor mothers have gathered at work meetings and other places to learn from those ladies, and have so quickly felt the value of the knowledge imparted that they themselves spread the fame of the lecturer, and bring friends and relations to listen.

This is true charity, but it cannot be practised by the ignorant.

Lastly, women exercise, whether we will or no, an immense indirect influence on political life. That alone points out the importance of turning their minds to the sober study of such questions; they will affect them somehow or other, ignorantly or wisely, according as they are prepared. We do not here enter into political questions, strictly so called; but the consideration of whether or not women should learn to take a serious and large interest in political action—that is, in public action involving the national welfare—is distinctly an educational question, and that the study of political economy will turn the attention to the wider field of national life in all its aspects is one of the reasons that makes it educationally valuable. Hitherto the interest of women in politics has generally been personal, and has, therefore, risen to fever-heat in times of war or of parliamentary or electioneering excitement, to sink to zero in those times of far more enduring national importance when all the forces of society are acting undisturbed, when the working of opinion is like the flow of a full, deep stream, not the noisy fury of the torrent in its momentary excitement, and the results of action are far-reaching and deep-seated rather than brilliant. In such times the tone of public feeling in

men also is too often far from being a high one; and if it be so, if patriotism which would kindle at the approach of a storm cools while a nation is gliding into danger, it may be attributed not a little to that very fact of women's indifference to and ignorance of politics. Women quickly feel the grandeur of heroic action or character, and the generation succeeding one that has lived through the fearful excitement of a great war grows up under the home influence of patriotic sentiment. The mother's strong emotions have worked upon her sons; and this may be no inconsiderable cause—though one hitherto unnoticed by historians—of the active public progress that is generally made by a nation after a period of trial and suffering. But emotion dies away; women return to the apathy of ignorance, and hence the next generation does not bear from home into the world those watchwords of public duty, love of country, self-sacrifice for a noble cause, which were echoed from every hearth when the women's hearts were stirred.

Truly, men who wish right principles to become a moving power in society, and neglect the aid of women in enforcing them, are not unlike one who should spend his force on hammering cold iron, while neglecting the furnace at his hand, whose glow would make that thankless toil easy and effective. In one momentous subject only has it been generally allowed that women have necessarily the same interest as men; and with regard to this, history teaches us some instructive lessons. If the early Christians had disdained the co-operation of women, how many more generations would have passed away ere the religion of the Cross had driven from homes and temples the impure rites of the ancient gods! If

Luther and the other great reformers had been content to leave women outside the movement, to abandon them to the ignorance and the spiritual subjection which they cast off themselves, how much longer would the era of religious freedom have been delayed !

This age in which we live is essentially one of social reform—reform needing the united action of unselfish feeling and of sound knowledge based on scientific truth, and carried forward on that ‘wave of emotion’ which transforms conviction into motive; and therefore it is that the subtle and powerful influence of women is so much needed as an instrument of national welfare, and that the study that peculiarly deals with social questions is one of the indispensable studies for their higher education.

Having thus briefly considered the three studies I have pointed out as essential to the higher education for women, it remains, finally, to say a few words to guard myself against misunderstanding, owing to the apparent exclusion of subjects more generally valued.

The term ‘higher education’ is intended, as said before, to designate the instruction given after school age, the course of studies which, like the university or professional education of men, does more or less discipline the maturer faculties, and prepare for the actual business of life. It is evident, therefore, that the three subjects named could have no pretension to be a complete curriculum of such studies. Viewed as discipline only, whatever subjects the experience of generations has pointed out as best for strengthening and developing the various powers of the mind in the

one sex, must be equally fitted to promote the same purpose for the other; but I am far from believing that the same course must necessarily be followed. On the contrary, the more principles of education are studied, the more will it be recognised that *methods* are of so much more importance than *subjects*, that a true educator will make any simple pursuit, the means of which may be nearest at hand, do more towards drawing out and strengthening the faculties of his pupils, than is often done by the process of qualifying for university honours through the study of some of the highest subjects on which the human intellect can be employed. With regard to training for the business of life, whenever women obtain an entrance into any profession, the studies requisite for that will become the school of higher education for them, as for men; but the peculiarity in their case which made me point out as essential the three subjects above mentioned, is that great fact of nature which assigns to women one special calling requiring careful training of the highest kind apart from any other study, whether of choice or profession, that they engage in. If a man marries, his active life in the world remains unaltered; but marriage to a woman, even if it should not withdraw her from any money-making calling she may have followed as single, will probably open up new duties, adding another profession at home to that which she has studied for out of home. And it is this peculiar position for which the course of higher culture indicated in these pages is intended to prepare. Physiology and Mental Philosophy, bearing evidently and directly on education, which in that new home-calling becomes the woman's

first great duty; and the third, Political Economy, referring to her obligation as a member of society, as a citizen of the state, which women are too apt to forget, but which in the position of heads of households it is no longer pardonable to overlook.

Thus, I repeat, these three subjects occupy peculiar ground and legitimately claim to be *essential*, as distinguished from others which are nevertheless eminently desirable in any complete view of higher culture.

No subject can be chosen from the vast range of knowledge and of human interests that may not with advantage find a place in studies having such culture for its object.

Those most generally in favour are History and Literature, and it is difficult to overrate their value. Literature, the highest product of our great human gift of language, the inheritance bequeathed by each nation from generation to generation of its people, treasuring the tradition of the past, and enriched as time flows on with all that fresh knowledge and new views of thought or imagination have given to feed or delight the human soul,—literature is the highest manifestation of the spirit of man speaking to present and future generations: and to discuss the value of such a study, whether pursued through one language or through several, is like discussing the value of feeling the beauties of Nature, or the grandeur of heroic action; it is simply above discussion.

Till the field of knowledge grew so rich that men were forced to confess the impossibility of compassing all, and the difficulty of choosing the best, and till the

money value of knowledge had introduced new and fallacious tests to direct the choice, none doubted the supreme value of letters in education; and no man born to the inheritance of such a literature as our own could, without something like treason to his country, undervalue its influence now. Yet in my opinion it scarcely in the present day holds its legitimate place in education or in society.

History has no such wide, indisputable claim upon our affections as have those poetic creations, those utterances of wisdom, that literature has preserved for us through ages past; but it is to all who study human nature a source of imperishable interest. There, the psychologist, the educator, the politician, find the examples and illustrations of the great principles they inculcate; there, on a great scale, we see the passions, the poetry, the base selfishness, the sublime self-devotion, of which we study the springs and seek to direct the movements in the government of nations and in the training of each human being. To women especially, whose actual experience is generally so limited, the study of history is invaluable; it is impossible to find a substitute for it in the labour of directing young minds from individual to general interests; from idiosyncrasies to great human characteristics; from small and narrow views of the world and of duty, to large considerations of order and law, and moral purpose over-riding all selfish schemes of parties or of nations. Other grounds for the value of history there are in abundance, but these are enough. So long as we value our place in the great human family; so long as we recognise an inheritance from the past,

or labour in hope of progress for the future, so long must history be one of the subjects which claim an honoured place in every system of higher education.

I have spoken of these two subjects as the most common and the most popular of those generally proposed for lectures, merely to prevent my being supposed to undervalue them. Of less popular ones, such as logic, or physical science, or mathematics, I might be yet more inclined to speak, owing to their very unpopularity, but, as before said, my purpose is not to frame any complete curriculum of higher studies. These are in large measure better left to choice. Each subject thoroughly studied becomes necessarily the centre of many inquiries and interests. Each of the three subjects, for instance, mentioned as essential, would lead the student into a wide field of connected subjects — Political Economy, appealing to History; Human Physiology, opening the way to Comparative Physiology and to Natural History in its many branches, and to Geology as the record of past history and changes — the mere study of Kinder-garden education turning the mind not only to natural history, but to physical science and mathematics, and to art, the elements of which the teacher must have thoroughly mastered, while any one portion of these various studies can be followed up more fully as inclination may direct. The range is wide enough, and choice cannot be too free. Holding on certain definite grounds a few studies to be indispensable, I would exclude none. So long as essentials are never lost sight of, let us add as much vigorous discipline of the understanding in other directions, as many more graces of high culture,

as time, or means, or occasion may permit. Our object, in short, is not to *limit*, but simply to insure that one indispensable harvest shall be reaped before labour is diverted to new fields and more varied cultivation; to remind women that whatever their chosen path of activity, they have one God-given mission whose claims must be paramount to all.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX*

SOME DIFFICULTIES CONNECTED WITH KINDER-GARTEN TEACHING IN ENGLAND

THE introduction of Fröbel's system into this country is attended by some peculiar difficulties, to which it may not be useless to draw attention in order that its friends may be prepared to meet them. They spring from its foreign origin, which makes its naturalisation among us slow and troublesome. These difficulties may be classed under two heads, the want of teachers and the want of

* Many of the remarks in this appendix are in some degree out of date ; but I let them stand, because it is in detail only, not in the spirit, that they are now inaccurate ; the difficulties remain the same, and must still be met in the same manner. The training of English teachers, so strongly insisted upon here, has been prosecuted with zeal ; and though the success has not yet been such as we hoped, the comparative failure has been from causes which only experience could bring to light, and which we hope to deal with more successfully in the future. So with regard to the certificates given by the Fröbel Society, on the results of independent examination, we are as much convinced as ever that this is the right method, and any partial failure has been owing to the inevitable slowness of working a new system, and to causes, altogether foreign to our original design.

books; to which we may add a third, the reluctance in England to believe that considerable training and knowledge can be wanted for the teachers of little children from three to seven or eight years old. A few words, then, upon each of these points may be useful here. I shall quote mainly from an address I had occasion to make some weeks ago to the Fröbel Society, pointing out these difficulties to them as marking the direction in which, as it seemed to me, their immediate exertions should tend.

The first difficulty we have to overcome is that of procuring Kinder-garten mistresses, and with all due respect for the admirable foreign teachers who are working among us, it must be admitted that in order to popularise the system, to make it take root in this country, it must be worked by English women. Hitherto, in most cases, when it has been desired to establish a Kinder-garten, the difficulty of getting an English mistress has been the great obstacle. Some enterprising persons have sent over to Germany for teachers, but naturally they come speaking a foreign language without ease, and are unfamiliar with all the surroundings of the children, whereas a teacher should be familiar with every detail which goes to build up the child's mental life. This difficulty is felt with mere servants, who are brought over to talk a foreign language to children. Yet they live in the same house and quickly familiarise themselves with its circumstances, while the schoolmistress lives apart and only meets her little pupils at stated hours, so that a long time must elapse before she can bridge over the distance between them. Some persons have planned sending English girls to be

trained in Germany, but there the difficulty of the language meets us again. The proposed students perhaps know nothing of German, at best they know it from school teaching only, and much time is wasted before they can derive full benefit from the special training they have gone to seek. We shall never make wide progress till these obstacles are removed. The system cannot acquire vigour among us till it has a native growth, until then it will be only as an exotic, needing care and propping up amid the free and hardy vegetation native to the soil.

Closely connected with this part of the work of the Society is that of using its influence to ensure that Kinder-garten teachers are not only duly instructed in their special office, but that they are as far as possible well-educated women. The wider the culture any mind has received, the greater its aptitude for recognising and acting upon philosophical principles; and conversely, the narrower the culture the greater the incapacity for going beyond the rule of thumb, and often the greater the aversion to even recognising that there may be something beyond it. In all departments of instruction it is essential that the teacher should not be a mere recipient and detailer of knowledge, that he or she should draw from a living spring, not from a rarely-filled tank; but in teaching little children, especially in using a method in which every detail is part of a connected, logical whole, it is more than ever necessary that the teacher should speak from a full mind, that her own observations or reading should supply her with illustrations, her own knowledge enable her to answer the questions which the children will

ask, and which they will certainly not often put in the convenient form which will allow the answers of text-books to be given. The child's nature unfolds spontaneously, and the teachers must be able spontaneously also to meet the requirements of that growth. The course of instruction for Kinder-garten teachers ranges over so large an area that in itself it forces a considerable amount of knowledge. The best authorities are agreed that it should form a two years' course of study, the first given to acquiring thorough mastery of Fröbel's theory and of the occupations through which it is applied in teaching, and also that amount of instruction in various branches of knowledge which are requisite for the teachers; the second to be spent in practical work as an assistant in a Kinder-garten. Owing to the scarcity of training-classes, and the still greater scarcity of good Kinder-gartens in which the year of probation would be profitably spent, both these conditions are difficult. Another difficulty arises from ignorance or prejudice, too generally prevailing in the English public. We are apt to be very impatient of preliminary study, we want quick and ready methods, and are too apt to take an ill-made by-path for a high road to knowledge. We readily concede an apprenticeship of several years for a mere handicraft, but grudge half the time to that noblest of crafts which fashions the human creature for the work and duties of life, for service to God and man. There is among many people a notion that girls who have left school unfit to become ordinary governesses, may easily by a few lessons in the art of using Fröbel's 'gifts,' turn their insignificance to account in a Kinder-garten; but every effort of this

Society should be used against such a fearful subversion of its objects, remembering that the Kinder-garten is either an indifferent infant school or the practical application of the only philosophical system yet devised, according to the hands into which it falls.

A training-school for Kinder-garten teachers has been at work for three years in Manchester, and certificates for first-class mistresses are given to the successful candidates after a two years' course of study and practice, and for second-class or assistant mistresses to those who reach a lower point of attainment. In like manner it has been decided that examinations shall be held under the auspices of the Fröbel Society for students trained in any of the different classes now at work, and for any others who may present themselves after private study, and wish to have their qualification tested. Certificates will be granted according to the result of the examination. An opportunity is thus afforded of taking some important steps towards establishing a standard of efficiency for English Kinder-garten teachers, including the degree of general knowledge which is the necessary preliminary of all special or professional culture. In France and in Germany this includes a considerable amount; one foreign language being required in addition to thorough grounding in the usual branches of school instruction. With us we should probably be obliged to place the standard lower at first, to meet the many cases where such general knowledge has been scantily provided for in ordinary school-teaching. But it would be a great error to suppose that a teacher is fitted for her work by immediate Kinder-garten training alone. Fröbel's method requires much speaking, and a

teacher must speak fluently and correctly, which of course she will not do without sound grammatical knowledge and habit of easy composition. Arithmetic is essential to Kinder-garten teaching, and its peculiar method of making the children discover the principles for themselves could not be practised by one who was not familiar with the ordinary processes. As with the Arithmetical so with the Geometrical notions they impart, the teacher must be acquainted with the subject in its proper form before she will draw from the exercises with cubes and the drawing of geometrical figures, all the lessons the children are made to teach themselves under skilful guidance. The Geography also should of course range beyond that of England, and especially include the elements of physical geography, which kindle the greatest interest in children, to whom a common map is a dead letter. And in History and Literature some proficiency would be required, first as the essential stamp of a careful education, and secondly, because few subjects so much contribute to enrich the mind, to furnish it with matter for illustration and knowledge of character, both so essential in the work of education. The fact that teaching is free in this country, *i.e.*, that no regulations prevent any ignorant pretenders from trading upon the equal or greater ignorance of parents, is one which tends to lower the general level of teaching power in England. There is no necessity of working up to a certain standard, and the best only, either of teachers or those who employ them, are able to fix a standard for themselves. But in a new and foreign system like this, in regard to which the public cannot but feel their own

ignorance, the value of a certificate of competency is more likely to be recognised, and we may believe that teachers who do obtain such a certificate from a Society that gives it only on the verdict of competent and independent examiners, will have a better prospect of employment than others whose work shall only have been certified by the teachers under whom they have studied. It is said that many elementary school-mistresses are studying the method and may come up for examination. This deserves all encouragement, and should be met by great indulgence in the examiners at this early period of our undertaking. The English part of the examination these mistresses will of course easily pass, or their Government certificate may perhaps be taken as exempting them from it; their difficulty is an immense one, it is that of obtaining any sufficient knowledge of Frobel's method through the medium of such scanty works as we possess in English, of acquiring the elements of physical science which are indispensable for the Kinder-garten teacher. One accustomed to teaching, and having had the training which that class of teachers alone obtain in England, would, with the help of good books, probably master the Kinder-garten method without much difficulty, but science is so deplorably neglected in our schools that the botany, physiology, natural history, and elementary physics, which are essential, will have to be studied for the purpose; still, in our present condition, we must rejoice that any have zeal and courage to add this labour to their already laborious lives, and give a hearty welcome to their efforts.

Our object is to inoculate the country at large with

these new principles, and elementary schoolmistresses will afford us invaluable aid, since through them we reach directly a very large class of children, and one for whom the Kinder-garten is pre-eminently valuable. In the short school life of these children there is no time for correcting the blunders of early training, while we may safely say that instruction given to them from seven to ten or eleven years of age would be profitable in a fourfold degree if their minds had been previously trained, as they would be in the Kinder-garten, to observe, to inquire, to work accurately, and to live in orderly obedience and harmony. The whole nature of the child would come in a higher state of preparation under the influence of the ordinary schoolmaster or mistress, and the short time they can command will be proportionately fruitful of good results. These considerations make us feel that every effort to introduce the system intelligently into elementary schools should be welcomed, and everything done to meet the meritorious efforts of mistresses who study in the intervals of fatiguing daily work. They stand in a different category from young students, who, free as yet from the trammels of practical life, can study under good tuition, and therefore should be expected to reach the highest efficiency, and must be supposed ambitious to reach it.

We come next to writing as a means of spreading knowledge of the subject. I have said that the books are buried in a foreign language, but more, and worse than that, they are separated from us by the strange invisible lines of foreign thought. Nothing is easier than to have books translated from one language to another, but far different is it to lift them from one region of national

thought and sentiment to another, and yet this must be done in a subject like ours if we are to make real use of the valuable materials the Germans have elaborated for us. In matters of science and history, of classical learning or abstruse philosophy, in all of which the other nations of Europe have borrowed so largely from the Germans, the form of the thought as influenced by native associations and mental habits is of comparatively little importance, and minds habitually occupied with such matters are fit to deal easily with minor difficulties. But *we* have not only a difficult subject to study, we require to *popularise* it. If we translate books it is for the sake of the unlearned, of the young, who are necessarily unable to allow for national modes of thought, of the hard-worked teachers, whose scanty leisure for reading is heavily overtaxed if books are made abstruse by their method as well as their matter.

It is this difficulty which has hindered the translation of several works that would be of great value to us. Fröbel is a difficult author to his own countrymen, defective in style and in that methodical arrangement of facts or speculation which, more than anything else, makes a difficult subject clear. The valuable work of Mde. Marenholtz Bülow, on 'Labour and the New Education,' as she calls Fröbel's system, could not be advantageously translated as it stands, because portions of it are too alien to our modes of thought to obtain acceptance, and would therefore hinder our purpose of popularising the subject. The same criticism applies to Hanschmann's exposition of the system through the medium of a biography of Fröbel, a valuable and delightful book, but in which the common English reader

unused to German views and method of rendering them, would find much that would rather deter him from than excite him to the study, especially when presented in the often ill-fitting garb of translation.* Yet we *must* get at the matter of these and other German works, for the knowledge we seek is there; and it is to be hoped that among the friends of the system will be found some good German scholars, persons able to read and meditate on these German books I am speaking of, to imbue their own minds with the doctrines they present, and to give them to us, not in translation, when exact translation is unadvisable, but in a truly English form; in writings, whose illusions and imagery, the associations appealed to, the actions and habits quoted in illustrations, shall be such as simple English readers will feel and appreciate.

Should the day ever come when the Fröbel Society is more richly endowed with funds, a portion of those funds will doubtless be devoted to aiding such publications, for we cannot have an intelligent appreciation of the system without full exposition of its principles. The literature of the subject now existing in English is poor in the

* Since the above was written the work of translation has gone on more successfully than I ventured here to anticipate. The Kindergarten songs I have already spoken of (p. 9). Miss Gurney has translated a considerable portion of Köhler's practical exposition of the system. Miss Alice Christie has given us a good translation of Mde. Von Marenholtz's "Child Nature," and will perhaps execute the difficult task of translating her larger work above-mentioned. The life of Fröbel by Miss Shirreff, a mere sketch, is founded on Hanschmann's work, and was written with the feeling that without some knowledge of the man himself, his work would never be more than half understood.

extreme. Nor is the study of education itself made easily accessible to ordinary readers among us.* We have in English many valuable writings on education—lectures, books, essays innumerable, and some of the highest value; and on moral subjects, every point that the educator has to consider has doubtless been fully treated, but these books are often little known to the class of readers we must principally bear in mind. If we wish to make a study popular, to engage a large number of persons to take an interest in it, we must smooth the material difficulties at least out of their path, and not leave them to seek instruction in scattered writings, the immediate application of which to their particular branch of inquiry will not always be apparent. For instance, most writings on education refer to the school period, and although principles are the same, the mind unaccustomed to inquire into principles will not carry back to infant life the psychological facts on which the education of a later period is founded. Still less will it be felt at once, how much more important in an educational point of view is the period all such works ignore than the period they are exclusively occupied with.

This fact, recognised in principle by philosophical

* Now that the subject of education is taken up seriously by the University of Cambridge, the study of education will assume quite a new aspect, and will be facilitated by books and lectures on all the subjects connected with it, apart from the direct work of the Teachers' Training and Registration Society, whose college in London was opened two years ago, and of the excellent lectures in connection with the College of Preceptors who set the first example in this direction. At Edinburgh and at St Andrews the subject of education has also been taken up.

writers, is brought out clearly and in a practical form by Fröbel and his school only; and therefore must these German writings be rendered easily accessible to English readers, if we wish their principle to exercise any wide influence over the English public.





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