In the Land of Froebel

AN INTERESTING PLACE IN BERLIN—SCHOOL FOR MOTHERS, FATHERS AND CHILDREN — WORK AND PLAY.

One of the most interesting places in Berlin is the great educational establishment, the Pestalozzi-Froebel Institute, which owes its being to the energy and enthusiasm of the late Empres Frederic. By a curious contradiction, Germany, the most conservative and domesticated of countries so far as women are concerned, admits that it is the advent of femininism and the decay of interest in housekeeping which made the institute a necessity. According to a Berlin journalist, the German girl, like her sisters in most other countries, finds herself compelled to earn a living, and she also seems to exemplify that learning to manage a house has to be put aside while she is learning a business. Long hours and insufficient time for rest leave the moments which can be devoted to the science of housekeeping so scanty as to be of little use. It was felt some school, where the work of the mother and wife would have larger attention than anything else, was a national necessity. When Germany does a thing at all it must be admitted it does it thoroughly. When it saw the need of supplying some substitute for the old home training it did it in the most comprehensive fashion. One little incident will serve to illustrate this.

SCHOOL FOR MOTHERS AND FATHERS.

Some years ago the mothers of pupils attending the institute were invited to come to short lectures and discussions in the evening. At first the response was little and shy. Very few women came and still fewer were able to get over self-consciousness and awkwardness. But by degrees things improved; the women encouraged other women to come; later they were able to give a personal experience or a word of housewifely advice in the debates which arose. The final stage is almost incredible. The wives, going home full of the information they had received, interested the husbands; a few of the latter rather shamefacedly volunteered a wish to go with them. By degrees the number increased, and now nearly as many fathers as mothers attend the discussions, and apparently enjoy getting information on questions of cookery, child rearing and general hygiene.

LITTLE HOUSEKEEPERS.

The institute is divided into two departments, which have separate buildings. The first gives instructions to all girls who intend to take charge of children, either as nurses, governesses or mistresses of infant schools; the second is entirely devoted to teaching housekeeping and cookery; Each department is under the care of a board of directors, and the receipts at the present moment cover all the expenses. The division comprising the care of children and the training of nurses and teachers consists of a kindergarten, an elementary class and an advanced class, where boys and girls from 14 to 16 years of age are taught. In addition there is a creche, where working women can leave their children up to the age of 2½ years, and where they are looked after by the pupils who are in training for nurses, etc. As the principle underlying the educational system of the establishment is that the first seven years of a child's life are the most important, great care is taken that only those fitted for the task are allowed to be with the children.

KINDERGARTEN.

In the kindergarten there are several playrooms and classrooms; there is a kitchen fitted with small utensils of all sorts, where the children can play at real cooking, and a garden in which digging and weeding and sowing can all be done by little hands. Gardening is looked upon as a most important subject. In the grouping of the children the ideal of Froebel is followed. Though there are over two hundred children, there are no classes larger than ten or twelve pupils, and each class under the direction of one of the pupils of the training schools take charge of its own quarters, doing all the decorating and dusting, looking after its flowers, its plants, and its birds. It is only for gymnastic exercises or for a walk in the country that all the pupils are put together. The younger the children are, naturally, the more time there is given to play, and it is only gradually that they are introduced to the wider and more complicated tasks. In Germany obedience is taught to all from birth, and probably in no other country in the world could children at the word of a teacher be made to work or play so harmoniously. Everything is managed by rule, even what seems, and probably is, spontaneous jollity on the part of the children. And there is no fear of a newcomer breaking the mathematical order of life; a special mistress has a special regard for the initiation of little strangers in the rules of work and play.

WORK AND PLAY.

Perhaps its most interesting feature is to see the zest with which tiny girls do the domestic class of work—they may be seen with their little brooms sweeping the floor, or with a duster rubbing up the furniture; or they will be neatly mending torn pictures or putting fresh covers on books. In the kitchen again, they will be careful about leaving any spots as they proceed with the various simple processes of cooking. They will hasten over the washing and turn to the polishing of tins and cutlery all with the greatest cheerfulness. The use of the hands is considered just as important as the use of the brain. And nothing is rushed! Each thing that the child takes to do it gets time to do thoroughly, and encouragement and help towards perseverance is never lacking. Children remain in the elementary division until 8 years old.

AS A REFUGE.

An important function at the Pestalozzi-Froebel House is the afternoon refuge it provides for about 60 children from the communal schools who, owing to their parents being at work, would have to play on the street at 2 o'clock.

SPECIAL ROOMS.

There are special rooms where they can work at a trade—bookbinding, brushmaking, pasteboard boxmaking. In addition,young girls are taught sewing, mending and dressmaking. Any work done during these hours becomes the property of the worker, and that though all materials are supplied by the establishment. Thus it happens that on the Christmas tree that decorates the poorest home, among the surprise presents for parents and friends will be some little articles made at the Institution. It has been found that even these few hours of casual labor help boys and girls to make choice of a trade, and at present in Germany the whole tendency of education is to help as much as possible to prepare children, particularly boys, to become skilled manual workers. A special college has been endowed at Leipsic for the training of professors in technical and practical work.

The General Crusade Against Kissing

LAW, SCIENCE, AND THE PULPIT IN ARMS AGAINST PRACTICE—NINE PER CENT OF KISSES SAID TO BE LADEN WITH GERMS.

It is not long since a gallant swain might claim a kiss for any little favor he rendered a pretty woman. Nor is it centuries ago since in the holiday season the good-looking youths of the town might go from house to house, claiming a kiss wherever the door was opened to them.

And now, must the mistletoe go?

May the maiden stand beneath the waxen berries as long as she pleases, knowing herself to be immune, unless some gallant youth is willing to take the chances of a summons and complaint in a civil suit, or perhaps risk arrest for attempted assault? Or is she safe because he is afraid—his physician has told him that kissing is dangerous to health; that it is a potent conveyer of germs of disease? Or is she all right because she knows her pastor will ask her or him to leave the church?

Or, strangest of all, does she belong to an anti-kissing club, wherein membership means no kissing until marriage?

"What's in a kiss?
Love and bliss"—

sang the poet once.

But some of those who have been brought to law because of just one have been more inclined to agree with the late Dean Swift, the cynic, who said, "I wonder what fool it was that first invented kissing?"

Today the law expressly defines kissing—that is, the kind that isn't reciprocated—as assault. The kissee may go to a criminal court, just the same as one who had been beaten may do. The grim, formal codes of the law nowadays know no difference between a kiss and blow, even if lovers and sweethearts do.

Science made the first attack upon the kiss.

At the International Tuberculosis Congress, held in Paris, the subject of kissing was treated scientifically. Professor Fournier opened the discussion, and other delegates strongly supported him, adducing numerous instances of the mischief — other than to the heart—that is done by kissing. Learned savants advanced formal reasons why kissing should be abolished.

One eminent physician actually described kissing as "that unpleasant custom." Another referred to it with an impatience that differed little from disgust. Others asserted with equal vehemence that kissing was little short of criminal.

It is not such a far cry from Paris to New York in these days of the telegraph and telephone and wireless. Scientists at once began to decry the kiss.

Health Officer Somers, of Atlantic City, was the first to make it the object of an official ukase. He held that 9 per cent of all kisses were laden with germs and he was backed up by Chief Inspector Beck and the board of health. Thereupon he and the city government stood sponsor for this notice:

"In view of the rapid spread of grip throughout the city, and in view of the known fact that osculation, commonly described as kissing, is the most fruitful agent of the propagation of the grip germ, it is advised that temperance and moderation in respect to said practice be more generally observed."

Dr. T. Franklin Gifford next made a formal statement in Cleveland, O. He declared that the kisser and the kissee might remain immune. He decried the kiss himself from a purely scientific standpoint, but he was willing to show how those thoughtless ones who continued the practice might still be saved.

"If you must," he said, "kiss all you want, but after each fifth kiss take a sanitary gargle. Germs and microbes like kisses just as much as human beings do. To be on the safe side, though, sterilize each kiss."

On top of it all came Dr. Nalpasse, a Parisian savant and physician to the Persian Legation at Constantinople. He especially condemned the kissing of little children, who always hate to be kissed and endure it like the little patient martyrs that they are.

He charged to the kiss responsibility for the spread of diphtheria, la grippe, scarlet fever, measles, scarlatina, mumps, erysipelas, meningitis, tuberculosis and even boils and carbuncles.

So science had its say.

Then came the church.

The Rev. D. L. Bass, of the Calvary Baptist Church, Cairo, Ill., started a clerical crusade against kissing. In several sermons he denounced kissing between the youth and the maiden.

"The kiss-devil," he declared, "is doing more to fill hades than the whisky-devil. Lovers should never kiss each other until they are married. Let young people hold each others' hands in token of their pure affection. And when they part the man may perhaps bring his sweetheart's tender hand to his lips for a fleeting, gentle, respected pressure. But that should be all.

"There is something magnetic, wonderfully thrilling in the kiss. When two sets of lips come together it is like two clouds charged with electricity; the one positive, the other negative. The result is, in some cases, an emotional explosion, a cloudburst of excessive passion and ecstasy. A kiss goes straight to the heart like the shock of an electric battery. The weaker party is always paralyzed under the blow, whether for good or ill, for weal or woe!"

Other pastors follow suit. There were threats of excommunication in more than one quarter for those who kissed and were not affianced.

An Anti-Kissing Club was formed in Dallas, Texas. The members pledged themselves not to be kissed—except by relatives—unless engaged. A fine was provided for the first offense, suspension from the club for the second and expulsion for the third. Of course, it was agreed that once a girl was engaged she could kiss with impunity—one man. In Urbana, O., another Anti-Kissing Club was formed.

Miss Helen Leonard was elected president of the club and Miss Belle Best, Miss Edith Turner and Miss Clara McCreary were made officers. A violation of the rule cost a $5 fine and a second offense meant suspension for fifteen days. Their work was followed up by the Virginia Legislature, which made it a criminal offense to kiss by force.

Science still kept after the poor little kiss.

A noted French savant conducted a series of brilliant experiments aimed at the practice of placing two sets of lips together for even the shortest, most evanescent period. He hired a young woman to be kissed. He enlisted the services of two men, one bearded, one shaven. The girl's lips were carefully sterilized and she prepared to be kissed.

It is the first time on record that any woman has been hired to be kissed.

Then the shaven young man pressed his lips to hers in the customary manner. Immediately the savant passed a sterilized brush over the girl's lips, dropped it into a test tube and sealed the top. The bearded man then stepped forward for his kiss. It was treated in the same manner. This brush was as carefully sealed in another tube.

Four days later the tubes were opened. The first, taken from the shaven man, was speckled with dots, showing colonies of yeast germs. But they were practically harmless. The second from the bearded man swarmed with microbes. There was a tubercle bacillus and a diphtheria germ. There were putrefactive germs, minute bits of food, a hair from a spider's leg and all sorts of horrible things with names so long that nobody but a savant could repeat them.

However, the young woman survived.

But what becomes of that precious old saying, so dear to every maiden—that is, nearly all—"A kiss without a mustache is like an egg without salt?"

And now comes the law. So many cases have been decided, and so many are in course of decision, that it has come to be a legal axiom that to kiss without permission is to render oneself liable to damages for assault, for that it what a kiss is now.

All that remains is to settle the exact value of the kiss, or kisses. That part of the law is still left to the jury and the damages have run all the way up from 6 cents to $3,000 a kiss.

A HASTILY-DISCARDED COAT.

"Oh, look. She is throwing her fur coat away."

In response to an urchin's cry the fashionable parade on F street stopped in its respective tracks the other day and gazed in amazement while a handsome woman calmly walked round a Persian lamb coat which lay on the pavement. Not a few of the watchers thought it a case of insanity suddenly developed, and were calling for the police. Others thought it a joke of some sort. But when one, bolder than the rest, asked what was the matter, the owner of the garment said:

"Nothing in particular, except that I am waiting for a rat to run out of the lining." Undoubtedly this apparently preposterous statement would have been taken for still further evidence of mental aberration if it had not been followed almost immediately by the appearance of a large rodent from one of the sleeves. The scene in staid old F street just at that moment bore a close resemblance to a pony ballet in most vigorous action. And the rat got away.

It seems that the owner of the coat had taken it out of cold storage about an hour before. Then she went into an F street lunchroom, and when seated the coat hung to the floor at her feet. A chorus of feminine shrieks interrupted the meal, and at cries of "A rat!" the assembled diners manifested a sudden fondness for the tops of the chairs and the tables. But the rat disappeared, and the lady with the fur coat soon started on her way. She had walked fully half a dozen blocks before she became conscious that the coat was unduly heavy, and a moment's investigation was sufficient to disclose the fact that the frightened rodent in the restaurant had found refuge in the recesses of her garment. Then, according to the street urchin, "She threw her coat away."—Washington Star.

It takes a mighty brave man to make a mistake and then not go to making excuses.

If a man is really wise it is a sure sign that he knows what heartache and remorse are.

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Love Affairs of Famous Men

SNATCHES OF LETTERS THAT REVEAL BEAUTIFUL SENTIMENTS AND DEVOTION BETWEEN MAN AND WIFE.

There is something inexpressibly beautiful in a love which time has ripened into a fullness and tenderness such as Charles Kingsley exhibited to his wife after years of life together, when separation from the beloved sharer of his joys and sorrows was a bitterness scarcely to me borne.

Apart from her the most beautiful of environments was but a wilderness. "This place is perfect," he once wrote to her from the seaside, where he had gone, alone, to recruit his health after an illness, "but it seems a dream and imperfect without you. I never before felt the loneliness of being without the beloved being whose every look and word and motion are the keynotes of my life. People talk of love ending at the altar. Fools! I lie at the window all morning thinking of nothing but home; how I long for it!"

Equally touching was Daniel O'Connell's devotion to his wife, as expressed to her in letters so ardent and tender that to read them almost brings tears to the eyes. "Yes, sweetest Mary," he wrote in 1825, "I could have wished to see one line also in that handwriting which gives me recollections of the happiest hours of my life. All the romance of my life envelops you, and I am as romantic in my love this day as I was 23 years ago, when you dropped your not unwilling hand into mine. Darling, will you smile at the love-letters of your old husband? Oh, no—my Mary—my own Mary."

Even Bismarck, the man of iron and "despot of Europe," remained to the last day of life the romantic lover of his wife. "My love," "My dear heart," "My beloved heart," "My darling"—such the terms of endearment he lavished on her to the last. "There has been no change in us," he writes in 1862, "since our wedding day, and I have never realized before that that was so long ago — five or six thousand happy days. May the Lord not consider how unworthy of them I am, and may he continue to pour out the fullness of his blessing upon us without regard to our deserts."

HAWTHORNE'S DEVOTION.

"Oh, Phoebe, I want thee much," wrote Nathaniel Hawthorne to his wife some years after their wedding day. "Thou art the only person in the world that was ever necessary to me. I am only myself when thou art within my reach. Thou art an unspeakably beloved woman." And, when writing to her sister he paid this beautiful tribute to his beloved helpmate: "She is a flower that was sent from heaven to show the possibilities of the human soul."

The love story of Robert Browning and his wife is one of the most beautiful in the history of human devotion. To say that he worshiped the very ground she trod on is no poetical exaggertion; for whenever he returned to London after an absence abroad, he never failed to make a pilgrimage to the church in which they were made one, and, falling on his knees, to kiss the paving stones in front of the door over which the feet of his bride had passed.

Very beautiful, too, was Tom Hood's love for the partner of his life, and the inspirer of that exquisite poem, "I Love Thee, I Love Thee, 'Tis All That I Can Say." "Bless you," concludes one of his letters to her, "bless you again and again, my dear one, my only one, my one as good as a thousand to your old unitarian in love.—T. H."

"God bless you and give you strength to support this present misfortune," wrote C. J. Matthews to his wife from his cell in Lancaster Castle, where he was imprisoned for debt. "A thousand, thousand kisses, my own dearly beloved wife. I have your picture before my eyes all day. It has been a real comfort to me, and I speak to it and kiss it every night. Once more, God bless you."

"This day, my love," wrote Lord Collingwood to his wife in 1806, "is the anniversary of our marriage, and I wish for many returns of it. If ever we have peace, I hope to spend my latter days amid my family, which is the only sort of happiness I enjoy."

MARLBOROUGH'S ROMANCE.

The great Duke of Marlborough was even more ardent a lover as husband than in the days of his wooing. "I do love and adore you with all my heart and soul," runs one of many similar letters, "such that, by all that is good I do and will ever be better pleased with your happiness than my own; but, oh, my heart, if we might both be happy, what inexpressible joy that would be! I think the happiness would be so great that it would make me immortal!"

Few tributes of husbands have been more beautiful than Steele's dedication of one of his books: "How often has your tenderness removed pain from my sick head, how often anguish from my affected heart. If there are such things as guardian angels, they are thus employed. I cannot believe one of them to be more good in inclination or more charming in form than my wife."

By its side, however, may be placed Disraeli's dedication of "Sybil"; "I would inscribe this work to one whose noble spirit and gentle nature ever prompt her to sympathize with the suffering; to one whose sweet voice has often encouraged, and whose taste and judgment have ever guided its pages—the most severe of critics, but a perfect wife."

Custodians of St. Paul Alarmed

CHANGES IN SUBSOIL ENDANGER THE WORLD'S FINEST CATHEDRAL.

Considerable anxiety has been felt concerning the condition of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, says the Sphere. That there are certain movements and tendencies in the fabric of the cathedral is undeniable, and any conditions which might endanger the existence of the finest dome in Christendom have been regarded with apprehension.From an official report issued by a committee appointed by the dean and chapter it is possible to obtain facts concerning the present condition of the cathedral.

It is clear that very early in the history of the cathedral movements became evident. In the eighteenth century Edward Strong, clerk of the works, "also repaired all the blemishes and fractures in the several legs and arches of the dome occasioned by the great weight of the said dome pressing upon the foundations."

The committee state that they have gathered from various documents and from reports made by former cathedral surveyors that the settlements of the fabric which occurred during the building of the church, and particularly in the piers supporting the dome, have continued in some degree to the present day.

The report concludes:

"After mature deliberation and a thorough examination of the cathedral and its foundations we are of opinion that in spite of these settlements there is no immediate necessity for any extensive remedial measures to be undertaken; but this conclusion is based on the assumption that the present conditions of the subsoil and the present water level will be maintained. We are strongly of opinion that the sensitive condition of the structure makes it necessary that the church be kept under constant observation.

"We also recommend that the condition of the subsoil and the state of the water level be carefully watched and periodically recorded, as all official investigations point to the same conclusion—that in them lie the possibilities of future dangers.

"We do not advise works of underpinning or of screening the foundation of the church. We consider that such operations would only be attended by fresh dangers. On the other hand, we consider that there is a large amount of structural work required in repairing the fabric, which should be proceeded with without delay.

"In conclusion we must pay a tribute to the wonderful constructive ability of Sir Christopher Wren. That a building of the magnitude of St. Paul's should have survived the altered conditions of the subsoil without more serious damage is an evidence of his masterly skill and ingenuity, for he provided against every danger known to his time."

Besides this report, supplementary evidence is given in a paper read by Mervyn Macartney, who is surveyor to the fabric of St. Paul's, before the Royal institute of British Architects. In no case have the foundations shown signs of insufficiency, nor has any organic weakness been discovered in the structure itself. Where the walls had for one reason or another been opened they were found well constructed. Mr. Macartney showed diagrams of the boxings recently made, and said that all the observations tended to prove that the danger to the cathedral comes from subterranean or atmospheric influences.

THE MAMELUKE'S LEAP.

It is a pity to spoil a good story, and the story of the Mameluke's famous leap, which is recounted to every visitor to the citadel of Cairo, is a good one. But it is a fiction founded on the fact that only a single Mameluke of the 700 and odd who were mustered in Cairo on that fatal morning survived the massacre, but he survived because he was on the sick list at the time, and was consequently unable to attend the parade in the citadel, and the pasha, having nothing to fear from a single man, spared his life. A story never loses in the telling in the mouth of an Egyptian, and he is quite capable of inventing one to account for any incident or appellation that he does not happen to understand. There were formerly two gates to the citadel at Cairo, called respectively the Gate of the Janissaries and the Gate of the Arabs, from the titles of two Turkish military corps in whom their charge was confided. But the existence and the very names of these corps have long been forgotten by the Egyptians, and they accounted for the name Bab el Arab by inventing a story of a saint called Sidi Azab, around whose name a whole legend of marvels and miracles has grown up, while the little chamber in the gateway formerly occupied as the guard house is pointed out as the saint's hermitage. By the bye, Knight Adkin, in his stirring and spirited ballad, has represented the massacre as occurring when the Mamelukes were entering the citadel. It was when they were leaving that it really occurred. The whole of them had entered into the lane which was their death trap before the gates at each end were closed before and behind them. The spot pointed out as the scene of the Mameluke's leap is on the terrelplein of the citadel.—London Spectator.

A cannon report has been heard as far as 146 miles.

Emigration has benefited the working classes in Sicily. Labor is scarce now, and in some places where only 30 cents a day was formerly the wage rate, 75 cents is now paid. The emigrants leaving Palermo for the United States last year numbered 48,853.

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