

question of *trained vs. untrained* teachers for the rising generation receive so little attention? Severe penalties are enacted against quack doctors; empiricism is seldom urged against those who, without training, perhaps without even much consideration, presume to form, equip, regulate, in short, to educate immortal minds.

Of this subject more again.

What are Kindergartens?

This is a question we have often been asked, and have always taken great pleasure in answering. The name is no doubt strange to many of our readers; but when they know its true meaning, "the Kindergarten" will be a favorite word in every home in the land. The Kindergarten is a bridge between the nursery and the school, in which the mind of the child is *educated by labor*. The Kindergarten materials are not alphabets, and books, and copy-books, but wooden blocks, planes, little sticks, strips of different colored papers, pasteboard, colored threads, slates and pencils, and sheets of paper. Long before a child can learn its letters, it will readily learn how to do a great many things. Little children do not understand a twentieth part of the lessons learnt in text books. The ideas of grown people are given to them too early. Children who do not understand what they are set to learn will naturally fall into listlessness and idleness; from this to restlessness, for the young mind *must be engaged*; from restlessness to mischief—and so the character is warped in childhood and can never be straightened. The inventor of the Kindergarten, Froebel, has benefited humanity. Let our children be taught in these schools by the eye and the hand, to measure, to weigh, to fit together, to build, to cut, to arrange, to observe sizes and positions, to draw, and by this means they will acquire more practical knowledge in a month than they could get from text books in several years. Let the child take to its favorite occupation—whether drawing, or building a house, or making a bridge, or imitating a doll's dress, or counting on the sticks—and while the ardent mind is thus pleasantly engaged in learning or in trying, there is going on the best discipline for after years. With such teaching it will be easy to fight down coarseness and restlessness, and many children will be saved to be good and great men, who might have run away, or become lost and demoralized by beginning to learn under the dry and unattractive text book system. This is what the Kindergarten means, and we hope to see before long every infant school throughout Canada conducted on the Kindergarten principle. There are many such schools throughout the United States, and wherever established, readily find favor among the people.

The following from the *London Advertiser* will explain Froebel's system:—

"Half a dozen boxes of children's toys, with innumerable pamphlets and fly-sheets descriptive of how to use them, have been placed in our hands by Herr E. Steiger, of New York, a manufacturer of the articles used in the Kindergarten system of instruction. Though by no means a new thing, the system of directing the play of young children so as to minister to their education is uncommon and deserves description in detail. Friedrich Froebel was a German who had been brought up without maternal care, and like most children he found the restraints of early school life very irk-

some. He devoted a lifetime to perfecting a system of instruction for boys and girls from three to seven years of age, having adopted for his motto the pretty phrase 'Kommt litzlaltz uns unsem Kindern loben.' Judging very rightly that neglect or mistakes in the nursery endanger health and happiness in after life, he sought to direct the mental and physical energies of children in the right path from the time they were able to receive impressions and classify them. Cramping the memory with indigestible facts was the shoal to be avoided, and children's natural tendency to play was the characteristic to be utilized. Through play the faculties of mind and body are developed, and when properly directed, habits of industry, perseverance, order and regularity are acquired. Amusement and instruction are to be combined in the use of Froebel's 'gifts,' as he calls the implements of his system. In Germany many Kindergartens are established, and in parts of the United States the system is viewed with favor. It is even proposed to engraft it upon the public school system.

"The toys are simple and inexpensive, yet capable of infinite variations. There are little sticks of various lengths, perforating paper, a slate for drawing, paper of various colors cut into lengths for plaiting and weaving, &c. With this, children seated at a table, divided off on the top into squares of one inch, are set to work. Patience and adaptation to the business are necessary for the teacher, who must possess the confidence of the children to be able to direct their movements. Of the effect upon the little pupils, observers say that the Kindergarten develops a capacity for quick and clear perception of form, size, color and sound; it trains all the senses, gives skill to the fingers, health to the body, cheerfulness to the mind, trains the moral faculties, and is a primary school for design, where the artistic tendencies of the child are cherished and cultivated, so as to materially increase the means for his future usefulness and happiness. None of his faculties are allowed to die out through disuse.

"Perhaps an idea of the system can be given better by the account of a visit to a Kindergarten than by seeking to impress what most thinking persons will readily admit—the strength of the impression a child receives at an early age while at play. A visitor narrates that he found the children forming a pretty star shaped figure upon the tables in one of them, being guided by the teacher, who told them where to place each piece. Each was then told to produce figures of his own invention, using all the pieces, the result being some wonderful combinations."

We clip a continuation of the description:—

"This is the method with all the occupations: First, the little ones are led; then they are allowed to go alone. They came some very simple and easy exercises upon slate, marked off in squares like the blackboard, from which they copied their work. They each made such picture as pleased them best. In all their work they had the sympathy and encouragement of Miss Held, praising them when it was done well, and helping on those who needed assistance.

"After this occupation was concluded, folding doors were opened into a room still larger, also sunny and bright, and the children marched in to the music of a pretty song, in which all joined. There for half an hour a series of games were played, uniting singing, simple gymnastics, and