taken merely to improve the health does not bring such advantages as exercises taken for amusement, or in working under healthful circumstances, so in the kindergarten there are no calisthenics as mere exercises, but the children have to perform the best exercises of the Grecian, Swedish, and German systems of calisthenics in playing their games, and when singing their songs. While taking his exercises the boy is not a boy moving his arms and legs to develop his muscles, but a hopping bird, a jumping frog, a flying butterfly, a carpenter or other tradesman at work, a farmer mowing or threshing with a flail or sowing grain, a windmill in motion, a ticking clock, etc., etc., always practising the best exercises but never being drilled.

Even the extension motions and balance steps of the British army are practised in their essential parts in the kindergarten, not in the formal and unattractive way in which they are presented to the shuffling recruits whom they transform as if by magic into erect and graceful men, but as necessary motions in performing certain plays.

MENTAL TRAINING.

Those who can only gauge a child's mental growth by his advancement in reading, will have difficulty in appreciating the mental advantages which a child enjoys in kindergarten. Thoughtful people are rapidly learning however, that reading as a school study has very little to do with mental growth: in fact, as usually taught, its tendency is to produce mental confusion and dullness. Reading is not taught in the kindergarten. There are some who put on their investigating spectacles, and scrutinize the kindergarten system to find its mental results, as though they expected them all to be immediately apparent, and then, because they cannot find mind nuggets in the only form which they are capable of appreciating, they say they do not exist, and that the kindergarten does not promote mental development. They forget that real growth in nature is slow, and that the preliminary processes of growth may go on for long periods without producing marked visible effects. If the mental training of the kindergarten produced only immediate results, and if its benefits were discernible to every observer, it would not contain sufficient philosophical truth to make it live.

The object of the kindergarten is to expand the mind, rather than to make it a storehouse of facts. It aims to set the mind in action in the exercise of every function of which is capable. The school only attempts to train the mind to remember and reason, often only to remember. The kindergarten calls into play all the powers of the mind, and teaches the child to observe critically, to note results, to compare, to conclude for itself. It develops the imagination, and gradually exercises the will, not accidentally, but incidentally, as an essential part of Froebel's comprehensive scheme. Memory is developed by exercise, not by word repetition; the child learns and remembers what a cube is in the same way as it learned and remembers what a spoon is—by using it. But, while the primary objects of the kindergarten mental training is not to give information, the child really acquires a vast deal of useful knowledge, especially such as will be of value to him in prosecuting the studies of arithmetic, mensuration, geometry, and architectural and industrial drawing. Nor does he need to wait until he begins the systematic study of these subjects before making a practical use of the knowledge he gains. Two of the fundamental rules in acquiring knowledge by Froebel's system are:—1, Children learn by doing; 2, knowledge should be applied as soon as learned. So the extensive knowledge of form which the child receives by using his gifts is applied at once in the various occupations, and through them extended to an examination of all the objects of nature and art with which he daily comes in contact.

The child also receives a practical insight into the relationships of parts to wholes, and is taught the harmony of form and colour that must be found in corresponding parts of symmetrical objects and designs. This leads to the display of originality by the individual children, which cannot fail to produce great and lasting benefit both mentally and morally. It is a grand step in the growth of a human mind when it is convinced that it possesses original power, and need not be a mere imitator.

INDUSTRIAL TRAINING.

There is another kind of physical training in addition to that which trains the physique. It is not alone important to a man's well being that he should be strong, active, and graceful; his hands, the parts of his physical system which he chiefly uses in earning his livelihood, should be trained while he is very young, before his muscles have become fixed and his fingers stiff. There is scarcely any limit to the development of finger flexibility and manual dexterity if it is begun in time and continued systematically. It is a common saying that "a boy's fingers are all thumbs." There is no reason why this should be the case. A girl's fingers are expert in proportion to the amount of appropriate exercise they get. The boy does not usually play on the piano, or do the various kinds of needlework done by his sister, consequently his fingers become thumbs through lack of practice. The boys have thus been allowed to grow up and enter on the work of life without having any attention paid to the development of hand-skill, except what they receive when writing and drawing. This necessarily prevents their ever reaching their highest possibilities in skilled labour of any kind whatever. The individual and national loss thus sustained are too vast to be estimated. The early recognition of this lack in Germany, Switzerland, and France led to the establishment in these countries of technical schools for the special training of the hand in connection with various industrial pursuits. The result of this was that in a few years England found her manufacturing supremacy passing away, and was compelled to follow the example of her Continental rivals. Thoughtful men have for years been studying this problem, and endeavouring to find a remedy for this acknowledged defect in our public schools. This study has led to a proposal to have workshop schools founded as a part of the public school system. There has as yet, however, been no satisfactory plan proposed for the accomplishment of this subject. A more simple and practicable proposition is to have the boys in the junior classes do the same needlework as the girls in school. This has been tried in Boston, and the new educational code recently passed by the British Parliament makes it compulsory in the primary departments of the public schools. So far as I can learn, Toronto was two years ahead of any other place in this matter. Froebel made ample provision for the training of the hand in his system. One of the specific objects in his "finger songs," and in every one of the 'gifts' and 'occupations,' is the development of dexterous finger power.

SOCIAL TRAINING.

Closely allied with moral training is the attention constantly paid to the practice of the courtesies of good society. The home in most cases cannot afford the child the opportunity of associating with a sufficient number of children of his own age to permit the expansion of his social nature. The child needs suitable society, and unless he gets it, important elements of his character make but a feeble growth. The child is to be pitied, however rich may be his parents, whose only associates are adults. It is possible for a child to obtain society on the street, but the risk is too great there. Even at school the social intercourse among the pupils is necessarily confined chiefly to the recesses, and then in most cases is allowed to go on without the presence of the teacher. Froebel saw the evil effects of this, and made ample provision for the drawing out of the social instincts of childhood, as well as for practising the recognized rules of politeness, at the table, in the drawing-room, on the street, wherever man meets his fellow-man.

Respectfully submitted.

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