

re-statement, from a somewhat new standpoint, of what is recognized among us as an accepted principle, may, nevertheless, give the law a new significance to some of our teachers. One cannot but feel, indeed, from the earnest enthusiasm with which Dr. Montessori proclaims the principle, that it may appear in her own country, not as a re-statement of an accepted principle, but as a prophetic vision. But whatever may be the conditions in Europe, on this continent at least, the implied repression of the legitimate self-activity of the young child is not found in the practices of our well trained kindergarten and other elementary teachers.

Looking at the system as a whole, we have reached the conclusion that there is no reason why the child between the ages of three and five in a healthy social environment should be robbed of its superior social and spiritual influences for the doubtful benefits of the Children's House. Nor do we believe that this Method has in any sense organized as an educational instrument a community home that can, except in abnormal circumstances, compensate the young child of school age for any large loss of the family environment. Indeed, we feel justified in predicting that time will manifest that the freer and more spontaneous life of the average rural and urban home will develop a type of childhood, which even after enduring this repression of the "common school," which has so obsessed the author, will excel, both in the higher branches of education and in the after labours of life, the average pupils of the Children's House.

It is evident, moreover, that a general system of education, based on the one-sided biological and individualistic conception of life so manifest in this system is most unlikely to supersede the more social and reflective efforts of even the "decadent school" of to-day. And, although the author of the system declares with pardonable enthusiasm that her pupils are "noticeably different from those who have grown up within the gray walls of the common schools," and that she "should found an elementary school, worthy to receive them and to guide them further along the path of life and of civilization," it does not seem probable that any important reconstruction of our present educational ideals and practices can follow from a study of the Children's House or its methods.*

*Note: The writer of this treatise has examined the method from the standpoint of pedagogical philosophy. It is well, however, to add here the testimony of some who have used the materials and the Method in their school work:

During a recent visit to a number of Normal and other schools in the United States, the writer had an opportunity of inspecting the Montessori Apparatus and of seeing some of it in actual use also; he met a number of Kindergarten and primary teachers who were more or less acquainted with the materials and their purpose. As to the sense exercises, it was generally considered that they were too individualistic and lacking in interest for the average American five or six-year-old child to hold his attention for any length of time. The exercises preparatory for practical life, such as the buttoning and other frames, were found of little practical value, as the child usually possessed the requisite skill through the home education. Within the school also, especially in cases where a swimming-pool was provided, the child, it was felt, received more vital exercise in connection with the putting on and taking off of his own wearing apparel.