

The ground, however, was very ill-chosen ; the Catholic Clergy resisted what they considered a Protestant invasion, and the experiment never had a fair chance. The Swiss Government wished to turn to account the presence of the great educator ; so young teachers were sent to Froebel for instruction, and finally he removed to Burgdorf, to undertake the establishment of a public orphanage, and also to superintend a course of teaching for school-masters. There were instituted "conferences," and in his intercourse with the teachers, who came from many places to profit by his instruction, he found that the schools suffered from the state of raw material brought to them. Till the school age was reached, the children were entirely neglected. At Burgdorf his thoughts were much occupied with the proper treatment of young children, and in preparing for them a graduated course of exercises, modelled on the games in which he observed them to be most interested. In his eagerness to carry out his new plans, he grew impatient of official restraint ; and partly on account of the ill-health of his wife, he left Burgdorf. He remained in Berlin a few months, and then returned to Keilhau, and soon afterwards opened the first kindergarten at Blakenburg in 1837. He now described his system in a weekly paper. He also lectured in great towns, and gave a regular course of instruction to young teachers at Blankenburg. But, although the principles of the kindergarten were gradually making way, the first kindergarten was failing for want of funds. It had to be given up, and Froebel, now a widower, carried on his course for teachers during the last four years of his life.

It is in connection with these last years that the man Froebel will be best known to posterity, for, in 1849, he attracted within the circle of his influence, a woman of great intellectual power, the Baroness Von Bulow. These seemed likely to be Froebel's most peaceful days. He married again, and having now devoted himself to the training of women as educators, he spent his time in instructing his class of young female teachers. But trouble came once more. In the great year of revolutions, 1848, Froebel had hoped to turn to account the general eagerness for improvement, and Middendorf had presented an address on kindergartens to the German Parliament. His nephew published books which were supposed to teach socialism ;