

the growing human being. This is a necessary consequence of the theory of development. If the development of the young human being is organic growth, it follows that he has to do his own growing, that nobody can do it for him, that he will derive lasting benefit only from what he does himself. Only self-activity can induce the powers to grow, and the methods must labor to induce vigour—self-activity and to keep it in the proper channels. Good habits of observation, thought, and action—good habits in the formation of ideas and purposes as well as in their expression—organised knowledge and skill—can grow only from vigorous, well-directed self-activity, involving the use of all the respective powers of the young human being. Indeed, man naturally delights in activity, and his desire for activity grows with the growing powers; laziness and indolence invariably result from false education.

“ Thus, in intellectual culture, the first and foremost business of these methods is to arouse *attention*; in other words, to induce the intellectual powers to action to unite the impressions that attack the senses from all directions, to combine them with similar fertilizing powers into clear perceptions. In the development of higher formations the pupil must *remember*—i. e., *re-excite* previous formations to new activity,—and *imagine* them variously united or modified.

“ These and other things the growing human being must do himself, and in proportion as he is independently active within the scope of his acquired knowledge and skill, his powers will gather strength that will fit him for greater activity, and guard him against the curse of satiety, and its offspring indolence. And so in all things, the emancipation of the individual, his independence, can grow only from self-activity, and an educational effort is faulty whenever it saves the pupil wholesome labour and has a tendency to satiate.”

Frobel's mind undoubtedly was deeply religious in tone, and he held religion to be the fundamental principle of education. He belonged, however, to the rationalistic school of German thought, acknowledging God as the Unity of all things, the Father of mankind; but only seeing Christ as the Firstborn Son of God, because he believed Him to be the first who was thoroughly penetrated with a sense of His childlike relation to God. The most sanguine of Frobel's disciples seem to think that the Kindergarten might assist in evolving perfect characters. I must confess that my view of Christianity does *not* harmonize with Frobel's, and that my expectations from the Kindergarten system cannot therefore mount to such a height. I have had abundant proofs that the mysterious *tendency* to sin does not exist to a less degree in Kindergarten pupils than in children under conscientious and religious training elsewhere; but still I regard the system as a valuable link which has long been missing in the education of the young. I know that it promotes their well-being, intelligence, and happiness, and I could not think much of the judgment or generosity of anyone who contended against the simple natural way in which it seeks to tend and guard the little ones as lilies in God's own garden.

We now approach the immediate aim of my present lecture, in considering the duration and characteristics of the several periods of education recognized by Frobel. Such divisions are necessary for convenience of description, and they also indicate the points at which a change of teacher and school can most profitably be made. We must always remember that the training is to be made as continuous, as connected as possible, and that the child's own self-activity is always

to be regarded as the most important means of development.

FIRST PERIOD.—The first period, which should embrace the first three years of the child's life, should be conducted at home under the direct superintendence of the mother. In this stage the development of the human mind is chiefly animal; the self-activity of the child takes the form of mere doing for the first twelve or fifteen months. At a more advanced stage it begins to imitate or try to play, but it cannot be expected to play well by itself. If in this stage the child is guarded against receiving incorrect perceptions, and if it is trained to a right use of its limbs and its organs of speech, we may consider the intellectual part of its education well cared for. Even at this early age, a judicious mother will not neglect the exercise of a wise control over her child's habits and disposition. It will soon appear that the chief characteristic of the home education is not to be brought near him if the mother can prevent it. For the help of mothers in this respect, Frobel composed numbers of rhymes and cosetting songs to take the place of absurd old nursery rhymes. He laid down rules for the selection of toys, by which he specially excluded expensive, useless, complicated, and fragile playthings, as well as all those that contain anything unhealthy or hurtful, or which suggest anything ugly, impure, or immoral. He farther described points of excellence that would characterize a really good toy. This is the educational stage at which a good mother or nurse would take special pains to assist the child in its first efforts at speech. She would labour to correct its little mispronunciations, remembering what infinite trouble and discomfort such defects will bring to the little one if carried on into school life, and perhaps even into manhood. We all know how grotesque and ridiculous a very sensible man's speech may appear, if much disfigured in this way; and we all know that the most solemn and pathetic things lose immensely by being pronounced in a lisp or a gabble. And yet those who heard and thought over our chairman's lecture at the Frobel Society on “Vocal Gymnastics,” must have been convinced that English children at least need some training and supervision to help them to utter the many difficult combinations of consonants in our words.

SECOND PERIOD.—The second or true Kindergarten period extends from three to seven years of age. In this stage of development, not only perception but imagination is exceedingly active. The child recognises things, and also recognises qualities, but not in an abstract form; only in connection with the objects to which they belong. From the third to the end of the sixth year the only activity natural to the child is play, and therefore Frobel accepted play as the natural means of education at this age. He distinctly advised mothers to place their children at three years of age in a play-school under a properly trained teacher.

1st. In order that the little ones may now be associated with their *equals* in age and attainments. Children who are constantly in the company of parents and older relatives are apt to be encroaching and unduly precocious, showing a forwardness that by no means indicates sound progress. Children who are constantly with their inferiors are liable to be overbearing, insolent, unwilling to accord rights to their fellows, while they lose the advantage of being with a person of sufficient education and position to add much to their ideas.

2nd. In order that the child may be placed where the rooms, appliances, methods, teachers, and companions all favour that pursuit of play so necessary for its true development.