

Much emphasis is placed upon heredity of traits of character, but much more depends upon the influences by which the child is surrounded, and the treatment that it receives during its earliest years, than upon any inherited tendencies. Fretful treatment will most assuredly form a fretful temper in the child. And just as bodily deformities that are caused by accidents in childhood are most sure to be incurable, so defects in character acquired even in the earliest years, are most likely to mould the disposition for life.

The kindergarten system undertakes to develop in harmony with nature, all that is amiable and noble, and to choke out all that is undesirable in the child's mental make up. As the age of the child is that adapted only to play, the system combines play and education. The materials used in the process of training are termed gifts, and while they are placed in the hands of the children for a source of enjoyment to them, their play is so guided as to become at the same time a source of mental development. These gifts consist of woolen balls, wooden balls, cylinders, cubes and so on. First the child is taught to distinguish the different colours of these balls, to observe the materials of which they are made—note difference in form, etc. After these objects and their various properties have become familiar to them, other geometrical figures, such as the cylinder, the square, the triangle, and the cube are given, and they learn as before to compare and contrast. They are taught to place two triangles together so as to form a square, to place a number of squares upon one another until they have formed a cube, to observe wherein the cylinder compares with the ball, and how it agrees with the cube. From these objects they are taught to construct forms of life such as buildings, and articles of furniture. After this they are given employment such as drawing lines, folding paper, cutting out objects such as all children do when undirected in their amusements only in this case the forms are made in harmony with the various natural objects which they have handled. Nothing is done wantonly or at random.

The attention of the children is not held upon any one object long enough to cause weariness, but relief is afforded by change in the objects with which they are engaged, or in the lessons applied to them. Variety is also given by introducing a game, a song, or a story, in the midst of the lesson, so that all work is made play, and all play is made work.

It will readily be seen that such methods of training cannot fail to awaken observation and inquiry in the child's mind, so that all the natural objects soon become teachers to him. That all children are possessed of a natural capacity for such inquiry and investigation appears from the way in which they will examine and pull to pieces objects that come within their reach. It is necessary then that these talents should be furnished with materials to work upon.

It might be objected by some that such a process of training at such an early age, must interfere with nature; but to such an objection it might be replied that the aim is merely to give the child the best possible surroundings for nature to accomplish its grand purposes. In many cases this requirement may be fully met in the home life, but in many others it must be reluctantly admitted, that sad deficiencies appear. In some it may be from lack of ability on the part of the parents, to develop the child's nature, and in others various hindrances may occur, but the kindergarten comes in to supply all that a perfect home can afford.

EXCHANGES.

THE *Dalhousie Gazette* for February is as good a number as we have seen for some time. Volapuk is something we do not understand, but have no doubt the premiss is excellent. Would that a good many more were written in the same language. The article original "Journalism as a Profession" is to the point. "Pessimists Past and Present" is an entirely new view of that widely denounced class. The contributor is evidently a paradoxical pessimist, with a good knowledge of the bible. Dr. MacGregor's lecture has the force which relieves it of tediousness, a fault almost inevitable in a subject of this kind. The "Echo" gets an echoing slap back, and, if the clipping given is a fair sample of that paper's typographical work and grammatical ability, deservedly so. We don't agree with all the editorial remarks, but they have a stand-up-and-face-it air which makes them worthy of perusal and consideration. *Dalhousiensia* is rather full of love and lady.

THE *Varsity* is a modern looking weekly, and in some respects entitled to the first place among Canadian College journals, *e. g.*; it issues more numbers than any other Canadian sheet of its kind, and is full of inspiring promises. Late copies are not particularly crowded with literary matter, or anything else for