

THE KINDER GARTEN.

THE system of home and school education, known as the Kinder Garten (childrens' garden), has been formerly described in the "*Leisure Hour*." As several inquiries have been made on the subject, and as the system is about to be grafted on some of our Board schools, we give a few more words of explanation by one of the earliest pupils of Fröbel, who is generally reckoned the founder of the system.

Physical education or bodily culture must always be at the basis of every proper system of training. Taking physical education as the first step or foundation on which to build, Fröbel invented a number of games which should exercise, in the form of play, all the limbs and muscles of the body. These games have been borrowed from Germany, but since the wide spread of the system, many others have been invented on the same principle, and with the same object; and as English children naturally prefer English games in thought and feeling, as well as language, we can indulge them in this respect. While affording healthy and cheerful exercise to the muscles, all the games have songs set to music, which the little ones sing as they play, and great care must be taken by the teachers to observe that every movement should be in order, and in exact time to the music.

Perceiving that even babies, as soon as they begin to notice the things around, require some plaything in their little hands, Fröbel began his system of education at the very foundation, and gave the infant toys which he should be induced to think about as he grew older.

The first toy used in the school-room for children above three years of age, is a cube divided into eight smaller cubes, contained in a box which it closely fits. With this the little ones receive their first definite lesson in form, number, order, and construction. They learn

addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division by having the actual objects before them. They learn to distinguish the cube from other forms around, to notice the lines and angles on its faces, to distinguish the perpendicular and horizontal lines, to build a vast variety of forms of use and beauty with their eight small cubes, and also to embody their own ideas in some definite form, instead of following the teacher word by word and without thinking for themselves. For after directing them for some time, the teacher should allow her pupils to build as they like, merely pointing out any defects in the order of construction, or want of accuracy in form, which may strike his experienced eye in the wonderful things she will be called upon to admire.

Another plaything is then given, a cube divided into eight oblongs. The same lessons can be imparted with it, and it also affords many more facilities for making numerous forms and figures.

The next toy is a much larger cube divided into twenty-seven smaller cubes, three of this number being divided across from corner to corner, each into two triangular pieces, and three more being divided into four triangular pieces. This toy enables the pupil to extend his lessons and building operations and construct his houses, churches, and other objects of use and beauty, in a more perfect form.

A still more advanced toy is a box containing a cube divided into twenty-seven oblongs instead of cubes. Of the twenty-seven oblongs in this box, three are divided lengthways, each into two parallelopipeds, and three others cut each into two squares, being half of the oblong.

It will be perceived that these gifts bring the child step by step from the first rule in arithmetic gradually on to the extraction of the square and cube