

ful labour we may have acted in harmony with so much that Pestalozzi and Fröbel believed, that we resent the slight put upon our efforts by the more excitable advocates of the Kindergarten. In other words, we may know too little of the history of the early stages of human development to see how deeply Fröbel had studied them, or we may have puzzled and experimented so much as not to be content that another should have so far outstripped us.

I hardly know what to do about attempting a sketch of Fröbel's life, and yet I cannot work out my paper without some allusion to it, for his educational system was undoubtedly the fruit of a series of special influences operating upon a sensitive, romantic, poetic temperament, an affectionate disposition, and a mind that found extreme pleasure in studying human development, natural science, and mathematics. I think it is Herbert Spencer who describes great men as persons whose special temperament and qualifications make them the best exponents of the age and people to which they belong,—persons whose very nature has cooperated with all circumstances of time, place, and opportunity to make them the representative men of the truest thinkers of their time. Apparently in this belief the "Die Entwicklung seiner Erziehungsidee" of Fröbel, by Alexander Hanschman, an ardent admirer of Fröbel's, was conceived,—a biography of the most interesting character.

It is a great deprivation to the educational public that this book remains untranslated. From it we learn that Fröbel lived from 1782 to 1852. At the opening of this period we find him a motherless infant, stunted of leave to indulge in childish play, too shy to be attractive to other children, and almost ignorant of any tenderness and care from his learned father, who was a German pastor. The stepmother, under whose charge he came at four years of age, treats him at first with affection, but soon sets him aside in her exclusive care for her own child. Her coldness grows into dislike and injustice, and her harsh judgments and cross taunting words form a frequent and heavy trial to Fröbel throughout boyhood and youth. He finds solace in dreaming over the natural objects within his ken, in watching the very growth of the plants in the garden and yard to which he is generally confined; he enjoys the lessons and society he finds at the village girls' school, to which he is first sent; he ponders over his father's allegorical sermons; he is all aglow with happiness when his uncle takes him away, at ten years of age, to a happier and more equitably managed home. Under the old-fashioned illogical methods of school as he sees it, he shows little aptitude as a scholar, and yet he longs to be a student like two elder brothers. His stepmother, and his father's limited means, are against it. The imaginative, inquisitive child becomes a youth, who delights in introspection, and is fond of mystical and speculative reading,—who lends himself with enthusiasm to anything which promises to advance his own self-culture and his visions of a higher future for man in this world, and who is decidedly, though perhaps unconsciously, obstructive to all plans for settling him in a mere business career. At about twenty years of age, he becomes acquainted with Herr Grüner, who had then a Pestalozzian model school at Frankfort, and who, perceiving the true bent of Fröbel's mind, invited him to become a teacher. The misfortune of just then losing all his testimonials from former employers decides the young man into acceptance. Launched in his new mode of life, he now sets steadily before him this long cherished aim of ennobling humanity by his labours. He takes advantage of his first

holiday to visit Pestalozzi at Yverdon, and later still, in 1807, he takes his pupils, the sons of Herr von Holzhausen, with him to Pestalozzi's school at Yverdon, and works with them there for three years. He has a profound respect for Pestalozzi's devotion and originality; he sympathies heartily in Pestalozzi's advocacy of object-teaching, and of the harmonious education of the physical, moral, and intellectual powers of children; he agrees entirely to the Pestalozzian maxim, that teachers should proceed "from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the complex, from the concrete to the abstract;" but he cannot be blind to Pestalozzi's incapacity for government and discipline, and he fails to find anything like a thorough provision in the Pestalozzian system for gradual and continuous training and development of the child from the cradle through infancy, childhood, and youth. Do not for a moment believe that Fröbel would have depreciated the mission and labours of Pestalozzi. An American writer even says, "But for Pestalozzi and his predecessors, Fröbel might not have worked out his method, as their conclusions were his starting point, and their hints and practical endeavours he carried on towards perfection." Our next point will be to consider the stage of education which Fröbel found by experience to have been neglected, and then it will be interesting to observe on what great principles he built up his own system.

For some years after Fröbel had left Pestalozzi, he carried on a boys' school of his own, and he found, what many others have found both before and since, that it is impossible to crowd into the school years all the instruction needful for a boy's after success in the world, as well as to carry on that harmonious training and development of the child's whole nature, which he justly considered to be more important than the acquiring of a mere number of facts. As Miss Shirreff so well expresses it, "He had thought that better trained teachers would attain this object, but the result proved that the difficulty lay deeper still. It was in the condition of the children themselves, who came to school with undeveloped or misdirected faculties; and, henceforth, he devoted himself to the subject of early education, which gradually absorbed him more and more. For years he had tried the education of boys through men, and had failed in reaching his ideal; he now turned his attention to preparing for school education by training the infant faculties through the hands of women."

To provide a system of education of a truly natural and scientific character, he found that student and observer as he had been for so many years, he could not consider himself in possession of sufficient scientific knowledge and leisure to work a system out without still more University training. In July, 1811, we find Fröbel entering the University of Göttingen as a learner. The aim of his studies was to find the scientific way of providing a natural self-developing education. He felt the necessity of establishing a harmony between natural science and philosophy, and seems to have taken great interest in the work of Leibnitz upon the "Harmony of body and soul." In 1812, we find him at the University of Berlin; and the mere mention of the professors then teaching there will indicate the influences to which he subjected himself. Fichte was professor of philosophy, Schleiermacher of theology, Weiss of natural history, and Niebuhr of history. The first two of these seem to have been especially attractive to Fröbel; but the philosopher with whom he really agreed most was Krause, who harmonizes the various philosophers' methods, and directs them towards one