

in later years, the pupil will have to submit to much laborious study, as a discipline for his mental powers, and to grapple alone with many problems of thought, he will find himself well equipped for the work by that early awakening and wise direction of his powers which the Kindergarten has given.

New ideas make slow progress among masses of men ; but when we consider that it is only twenty years since the founder of the Kindergarten died, that he was a man without station or influence, and took but slight pains to spread abroad his system, that he himself wrote but little concerning it, and that most works on the subject are still untranslated from the German, the progress which these schools have already made is most encouraging. The Austrian government has just issued an order establishing the Kindergarten as a part of the regular school system of the empire, and requiring educators, even those of the higher grades of schools, to receive a course of training in the principles and the methods of its teaching. In Prussia these schools exist in all the larger cities, and many of them are supported there by the municipal governments, for the benefit of their poorest classes. In France and Switzerland they are found ; and the Italian Minister of Instruction has lately called public attention to the great merit of " this new evangel work," as he terms it. Even Hungary has set apart a sum for the purpose of sending young ladies to Germany to perfect themselves in the system of Fröbel. America, with the great stake she has in the right education of her people, will not be far behind in inaugurating such a reform. When once she has acquainted herself with their worth, it must be that she will give Kindergartens a hearty endorsement, and proceed to adopt them as the most valuable of infant schools. They winning able converts. Private institutions, more or less in conformity with the true Fröbel idea, succeed in many places ; and some of our larger cities support four or five.

But so long as Kindergartens remain private schools, with the price of tuition fixed at from \$60 to \$100 per year, they will be of little real importance. It is only as a part of our common school system that they can produce any considerable results. The city of Boston has already shown her desire to test their merits, and for the last two or three years one has been maintained at her expense, under the supervision of a special committee. This committee, in all their reports, declare the experiment to be a success, and express their warm approval of the work this school is effecting. St. Louis has just added one to her department of normal school instruction. Other committees will be led, in time, to follow their example ; and when the value and practicability of Kindergartens are once made clear to the general public, we cannot doubt that they will become established everywhere as a new grade of our common school, intended to precede the primary schools, and to take from them one year, or more, of their present course. Our towns and cities will then be called upon to begin the education of their children at three years of age, instead of four or five. This will require a considerable addition to the school funds ; and here the first practical difficulty in the way of the immediate establishment of these schools is met. Our ablest educators are beginning to concede their efficiency, and to admit that competent teachers in sufficient number can soon be trained by the superior instructors already amongst us ; but they question whether the public voice will approve the additional outlay which will be required. If it will not, it is only because, there has been, as yet, no sufficient opportunity for learning the value of what this outlay will procure. Our American people do not need to be told that they can afford to retrench in all things save in education ; and

that there they must be lavish with their money and unsparing with their pains, if they would not render their republican government a failure, and their own individual lives a series of awkward experiments. They know that the faculties of the citizen, when rightly trained, bring to the state its greatest wealth, and that it is cheaper to instruct children than to maintain paupers and convicts.

Our prisons, houses of correction, and reform schools are but the acknowledgments in brick and stone of our blunders in educating our youth. It were better to give small urchins of our worst quarters a right start in life, compelling them to attend a school such as this, and imbuing them there with a love of study and work, than to allow them to drift about among the haunts of wickedness, to learn sin and practice vice, and then to pour out our money after they are grown, in trying them for misdemeanors before our courts and in guarding their useless lives in prison for the greater part of their days. Kindergartens must in time be recognized as the first step in this great work of bending all the faculties of all our youth toward virtue, toward productive labor, and toward unselfish devotion to the general good. When we are wise enough to train twigs aright, we shall not need to wrench back and straighten the crooked trees.—*New York Journal of Education*.

McGill University.

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