

and toys, sometimes with, oftener without, a knowledge of the fact that it is the best way to train the senses and budding faculties of the child. The products of these home schools are often little inferior to those exhibited at Paris; but their artistic excellence is a minor consideration. The little girl who is taught in the nursery or at the fireside the mysteries of paper dolls, birds, animals, and houses; the little boy who learns in the fields or woods to make a whistle, a jack-o'-lantern, or a trap; the little one who learns to build houses of blocks, tents of cards, or, in short, to extemporize new playthings out of the materials at hand, is being trained in the kindergarten method, and his pleasure and improvement bear constant witness to the excellence of that method. Not only are the hand and eye trained, but the perceptive faculties are admirably developed, and the imagination stimulated to a vigorous activity.

As an indication of the pleasure and advantage derived by the child from such employment of his time, the advocates of the kindergarten confidently point to the superior intelligence and gentler dispositions of the children trained in these schools. And in this connection it is well worth our while to note the necessity of toys to the child. How warped and one-sided has been the manhood and womanhood developed by those whose

parents and teachers overlooked or denied the importance of play and playthings for little children! In such persons the imagination lies almost dormant, and every event or experience is clothed in the most sombre hues. Their lives constitute a most prosaic round, which steadily grows more dull and monotonous from beginning to end. Children who have no toys grasp the realities of life slowly and imperfectly, and never idealize. The art instinct is developed very young, if at all. Those nations which have produced many celebrated artists have provided their children with an abundance of toys. The French toys illustrate the peculiar characteristics of the nation. The same is true of the Italian, Swiss, and English toys. And it is a significant fact that those nations which have produced the greatest variety of playthings have been able to compete most successfully in the markets of the world in the sale of the finest fabrics and productions of artistic skill. If it would not lead us into too lengthy a digression, it would also be interesting to note the effect of an abundance of suitable toys upon the child's emotional nature. Deprive him of playthings, and he becomes uncivil and morose, morbidly introspective, and often suspicious and repulsive.—Condensed from the *New England Journal of Education*.

A COPY of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary was offered at a Teachers' Meeting to any one who should read the following hodgepodge, and pronounce every word according to Webster. Though nine teachers tried, no one succeeded in winning the prize:—

"A sacrilegious son of Belial, who suffered from bronchitis, having exhausted his finances, in order to make good the deficit, resolved to ally himself to a comely, lenient, and docile young lady of the Malay or Caucasian race. He accordingly purchased a calliope and a coral necklace of a chameleon hue, and securing a suite of rooms at a prin-

cipal hotel, he engaged the head waiter as his coadjutor. He then despatched a letter of the most unexceptional calligraphy extant, inviting the young lady to a matinee. She revolted at the idea, refused to consider herself sacrificable to his desires, and sent a polite note of refusal; on receiving which, he procured a carbine and bowie-knife, said that he would not now forge fetters hymeneal with the queen, went to an isolated spot, severed his jugular vein and discharged the contents of his carbine into his abdomen.—The debris was removed by the coroner."