

LIFE OF FRÖBEL

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A SHORT SKETCH OF THE LIFE
OF
FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL.

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A SHORT SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE OF FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL.

TOGETHER WITH

A NOTICE OF MADAME VON MARENHOLTZ BÜLOW'S "PERSONAL
RECOLLECTIONS OF F. FRÖBEL."

NEW EDITION,

INCLUDING

FRÖBEL'S LETTERS FROM DRESDEN AND LEIPZIG
TO HIS WIFE,

Now first Translated into English.

BY

EMILY SHIRREFF,

AUTHOR OF "THE KINDERGARTEN," "PRINCIPLES OF FRÖBEL'S SYSTEM."

LONDON:

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It has been thought by the Fröbel Society, at one of whose monthly meetings it was first read, that in the extreme scarcity of English books on Fröbel and his system, this very slight sketch of the life of the great reformer would be found useful; and I yield to earnest entreaties in allowing it to be published, though painfully sensible of its extreme imperfection. Written for a lecture, and therefore restricted within limits that rendered any wide treatment impossible, I might, perhaps, have made it less unworthy of publication, had I been at this moment in England, and within reach of books. But abroad, and without the necessary help, all I can do is to add a slight notice of Madame von Marenholtz Bülow's last delightful book, "Erinnerungen an Friedrich Fröbel," which will serve to illustrate many points that I could only touch upon in the lecture, and, what is far more important, will direct the reader's attention to one who is our best guide in all that belongs to Fröbel's system.

EMILY SHIRREFF.

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PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

SINCE this short sketch of Fröbel's life was written—ten years ago—some interesting letters of his have been published in the *Rheinische Blätter für Erziehung und Unterricht* (Nos. 2, 3, and 4, 1878), and now that a new edition of my little book is asked for, I have gladly seized the opportunity of including these letters in it. They were written in 1839 after Fröbel's return from Switzerland, where he had first fully realised that his theory of education would never be truly worked out in school, unless first applied to infant training. They are addressed to his first wife, then ill in Berlin, and give the account, day by day, of his first attempt to bring his system (afterwards developed into the Kindergarten) before the public of Dresden. They are so characteristic of the earnestness and simplicity of his nature,

and so stamped with his profound conviction of the philosophical and practical value of his views to the future of the human race—a conviction spreading yearly more and more among all thoughtful educators—that I feel sure my readers will be thankful for this addition to the biographical sketch, which in all other respects remains unaltered.

EMILY A. E. SHIRREFF.

ROME, 1887.

A SHORT SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL.

WHENEVER we have learned to take interest in a man's opinions, or his public action and influence, we naturally desire to know more about his life—to see what circumstances went to form his character, what peculiar impulses or purposes shaped his destiny; and thus we may conclude that members of a Fröbel Society, persons associated to aid in carrying into effect the views of this man Fröbel on a subject of the highest importance, must be interested in tracing out the history of his life.* That history is so closely connected with his opinions, that a fervent disciple of his, Alexander Hanschmann, felt he could not so well analyse his theory in any other way as by analysing his life—looking back to all the circumstances which helped to make him what he was, and step by step prompted or facilitated the growth and gradual unfolding of his educational theory. That book of

* The "Sketch" was originally read at a meeting of the Fröbel Society in June, 1876.

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Hanschmann's has been so interesting and so useful to myself, that I feel I cannot do better than take him for my guide in my attempt to give some idea of what the creator of the Kindergarten system of education was, while living and working among his fellow-men.

Friedrich Fröbel was born in 1782, in the village of Oberweisbach in Thuringia. His father, the minister of the parish, was a man gifted with those qualities which win the love and respect of children, even when, as in the case of our hero, he had experienced from him scant justice and less tenderness. Friedrich lost his mother before he was a year old, but although he had never known her influence, he believed himself to have inherited from her his imaginative and artistic spirit. His father married again, and the second wife proved a real step-mother to the poor child who was thrown so peculiarly on her care. Under this hard woman's rule little Friedrich was neglected and often unkindly treated, until, when he was ten years old, his mother's brother took compassion on him, and obtained leave to take him under his own care. This uncle, who occupied a post of some dignity in the Church at Stadt-Ilm, was a widower, who had lost his only son, and was glad to find an object of affection in his sister's child. Under his roof, amid plenty and kindness, Friedrich thrived and prospered for five happy years; went to the high school in the town, and enjoyed for the first time the healthy delight of companionship with others of his own age. In this new life his whole nature expanded; he remained delicate and was somewhat dreamy, but he looked back to this period in after years as to one

of great enjoyment. He showed no great aptitude at school except for arithmetic; but he began to be—what he never ceased being while he lived—an observer of nature; and in his great delight in watching plants and animals, as well as in his appreciation of companionship, we find the source of two of his strong opinions respecting the education of children. It is to his own retrospective account of his early life, given in later years to his brother Christopher, and on another occasion to a friend, that we owe these particulars, and are able to trace how early his mind received the impression which influenced him so strongly, of the analogy of the human being to the other organisms existing in the world, and the consequent belief that he should grow and develop harmoniously and completely as they do.

Fröbel in many ways may be called self-educated, for his school-teaching was most superficial; and his aims, and the view he took of what knowledge was essential for attaining them, were entirely original. Unconscious as yet of his inborn power as an educator, he exercised it on himself, and felt continually the failure of all instruction he received by its want of completeness, its absence of harmony with the outward workings of nature, its inferiority to the ideal he had formed. He early felt that there was a world for him to take possession of, to grow and develop in; and a little bit of grammar, a little mechanical arithmetic and geography and geometry, which made up the sum total of his school instruction, seemed all disjointed and purposeless. The geography especially, towards which his outdoor studies gave him a strong

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bent, seemed, as he expressed it, "in the air," without root or meaning.

Another leading feature of his mind showed itself early ; this was a strong religious feeling, and a sensitive consciousness with regard to duty. His mind worked much upon these questions towards the time of his confirmation, which took place at fifteen, and at the hands of his uncle. After this ceremony, which very commonly closes school life in Germany, it became necessary to decide whether he should be removed, as he ardently desired, to some place of higher instruction, or commence practical life in some shape not requiring this additional expense. Not only had his elder brothers been sent to the University, but the youngest also, the second wife's son, was destined to share the same privilege ; it was therefore peculiarly hard upon Friedrich that his step-mother was allowed to prevail, and to fix his future course at a lower level. She considered study too expensive a privilege for a poor man's sons, and had decided that the family income should not further be lessened by such indulgence. It was proposed to put Friedrich into some kind of office where his work would have been among accounts and inferior law business ; and an opening for this offered itself, but was relinquished by his father as a concession to the boy's own feelings. He shrank with horror from this mechanical town life, and, impelled by his intense love of nature, entreated to be allowed to become a farmer ; thinking that, living on and by the land, he would be in daily communion with all that appealed so strongly to his loving spirit. He was accordingly apprenticed for three

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years, at some distance from home, to a *Förster*, or manager of forest land, who, he soon found, neglected him and all the practical part of his work, and taught his pupil nothing. But he had books, works on natural history and mathematics, and these the boy studied assiduously. His ideal of a farmer's vocation comprised every kind of knowledge that country life could require—natural science, geometry to be applied in surveying, and many other subjects which seemed necessary to make that harmonious whole complete in itself and in its relations with surrounding things, which was essential even then to his idea of life in any position. He felt, though dimly perhaps, even at that early period, that this or that kind of knowledge should never be merely an instrument requisite for a certain use, but the rounding off of the human being's own development, the self-culture for a purpose higher than any worldly purpose, for which he was responsible to God and his conscience. This is one of the points that illustrate how important it is with a thinker like Fröbel to know his life; for these actual self-questionings and struggles of his own early youth give the key to what was most characteristic in his later theories.

When his three years' apprenticeship ended, it became evident to all that Fröbel had acquired nothing of what he had been sent to learn; and his master, to save his own reputation, wrote a shameful report of him to his father. This was exultingly received by his step-mother, who now at last thought he would remain at home, her useful drudge and victim. Fortunately, he had been wise enough to secure for himself the *Förster's* testimonial at the close of his

apprenticeship, and this set him right with his father, though it did little to lessen his penance under Frau Fröbel's government of home affairs. All entreaties that he might be allowed to continue his studies were set aside, and it was only a casual circumstance that led him to visit one of his brothers at Jona; once there, however, with his brother's help, arrangements were soon made with the trustee of some small property of his mother's that enabled him to attend the University lectures for two terms. But his very small resources were soon exhausted; with a boy's thoughtlessness, he got into debt, was thrown into the University prison, and only by relinquishing all future claim to the paternal inheritance could he obtain from his father the sum necessary to free himself. The amount of his debts appears to have been very small; the largest item was thirty thalers to the landlord of an eating-house, and some of his lecture fees had been left unpaid. Nine weeks' imprisonment seems a hard measure of punishment; but he did not waste them. Having felt his deficiencies in Latin, he worked hard at it during this period, besides reading whatever books he could get access to. He was by this time nineteen, and still adhering to his wish to become a farmer, after an unpleasant interval at home, he was sent to a man who seems to have been the agent for certain large estates. Here he entered into all the practical work of his calling, and, as might have been expected from a mind so contemplative, found practical life, with all its outward activity, far from satisfying. Before, however, he had formed any new plans, he was called

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home to assist his father, who had fallen into feeble health; and thus he had the consolation of more intimate communion with one whose intense energy, and unfailing steadfastness when he had grasped a truth, commanded his deepest reverence. After his death, the long misunderstood son could say, "May his now enlightened spirit look down upon me with calm blessing; may he now be satisfied with the son who loved him so truly."

Fröbel was now, at the age of twenty, entirely independent of control. He left Oberweisbach, and obtained employment successively in the forest department at Bamberg, and on private estates as land surveyor and farmer; still devoting his spare hours to natural history and other studies, reading Schlegel, Novalis, and ever earnest in self-culture in every direction. At this time, also, he made acquaintance with a physician and others who seem to have perceived something of his rare nature, and afforded him the opportunity of higher companionship than he had yet enjoyed. They also provided him with introductions at Frankfort, where he was desirous of studying architecture, some knowledge of which he felt to be necessary to perfect fitness for a land agent's business, in which much building was occasionally required.

This journey to Frankfort was the turning-point of his life. He there, after a time, made acquaintance with Grüner, the director of the Normal School; and this man, with evident penetration of character, suddenly proposed to him to give up his study of architecture and to become a teacher, promising him a post as assistant at once.

How he might have decided had he been altogether free we cannot tell; but what seemed at the moment a serious misfortune, namely, the loss of all the certificates he had received from different employers, coincided fortunately with this new turn given to his thoughts: he resolved to accept Grüner's proposal, and speedily recognised his true vocation. When he first found himself before a class of from thirty to forty boys, he felt, as he afterwards expressed it, well and happy—as if restored to his proper element, as a bird to the air, and a fish to the water. In speaking of this first experience in a letter to his brother, dated 1805, he says that “it was strange that he had felt at first as if he had long been a teacher, and born to that special employment . . . as if he had never lived in any other relation;” and yet he adds, “I had never thought to enter a public school as teacher.” In this position he realised the possibility of working for that ideal which had gradually become the conscious purpose of his life—the ennobling of humanity. It had come over him painfully before this, that neither through architecture nor any other labour belonging to his chosen path in life, was he likely to effect anything in that direction; but education had this for its direct purpose, and won him heart and soul to its laborious duties.

He took advantage of the first holiday time to visit Pestalozzi in Switzerland. This great educator, the forerunner of Fröbel in some of his principles and methods, was then at the height of his fame. After many vicissitudes he had settled at Yverdun, on the shore of the Lake of Neuchâtel, in the building

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appropriated to his use by the Government of the Canton. Here Fröbel first saw the practical working of views that had more or less taken possession spontaneously of his own mind ; and he was full of reverent admiration for the man who had struggled against so many difficulties, supported by the conviction that a sounder system of education, more true to human nature, offered the surest hope for the regeneration of society.

On Fröbel's return to Frankfort, his marked success as a teacher fully justified Grüner's choice. His class became the model class of the model school, and he had full opportunity to let teachers and parents see the advantage of his method of instruction by drawing out the pupils' own faculties. The first examination that took place marked his position ; but he himself dwelt rather upon the deficiencies of his own knowledge, of which his work as a teacher made him more and more painfully conscious. His ideal was a high one, and he felt his need of more study, and especially of going more deeply into methods of instruction and education ; and after two years spent in the Normal School, he obtained from Grüner his release from the engagement he had made to work three years with him, and devoted his time to private study. Soon after this he was offered the charge of three boys, the sons of Herr von Holzhausen, whose mother had learned during two years' intercourse to know and appreciate him, and now entreated him to save her sons, who had suffered so severely from bad management that she was utterly miserable about them. The attachment this able and noble-hearted

woman felt for him was the first of those female friendships which, in later years, exercised so much influence over and added so much charm to his life. In her house he enjoyed social intercourse, which helped to draw out his nature; and her earnest request that he would undertake the care of her sons at once proved her confidence, and confirmed him in his resolve to give himself wholly to the noble work of education. His view that the whole nature of each child must be drawn out to form the perfect man, and that only by such education (which alone deserved the name) could the race be improved, was already clear in his mind. His view of [the knowledge required by the educator was as large as his ideal purpose was high. He himself ardently wished to return to study at a university. What he felt he needed, as a teacher, besides languages and philosophy, was a study of anthropology, physiology, ethics, theoretical pedagogy, history, and geography; but this wish for wider culture was necessarily set aside for the time, in great measure because his scanty means were again exhausted, and he became tutor in the Holzhausen family in 1807.

Without being acquainted at that time with the works of Rousseau, he so far held the same views that he isolated his pupils from the world. He obtained leave to inhabit with them a country place a short distance from Frankfort; and probably his task of uprooting the evil caused by former mismanagement was thereby facilitated. He had all the influence of a free healthy nature to assist him, and no dangerous counteraction to dread from association; but after

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awhile he felt that such a system was cramped and one-sided. He was conscious also of the deficiency of his own knowledge in many branches, and, with their parents' consent, he carried off his pupils to Yverdun, and worked with them in Pestalozzi's school for three years.

This long familiarity with the master's method, and with its practical results, doubtless helped to ripen his own educational views. Points of agreement and points of difference were brought out into strong relief; and when in 1810 he determined to withdraw, it was with undiminished respect for Pestalozzi, but with a strong feeling that his system, even if it worked with the completeness which it never could attain under that original but most erratic genius, could never be a complete education, could never draw out and blend harmoniously the whole faculties of the child. An immense improvement on previous methods, it still did not deserve to stand as the new education destined to regenerate the race. He returned to Frankfort with his pupils; and feeling more than ever his own deficiency both in classical and scientific knowledge, in the following year, having saved a little money, he gave up his work as a teacher for a time, to become a learner again at the University of Göttingen, to which he repaired in July, 1811.

In so rapid a sketch as I am able to give here, it is impossible to enter into the subject of his studies; and yet their nature and extent bear witness to the earnestness of his preparation for what he felt was the superior work of his life, and show likewise how in proportion as he pondered the truly sublime object he

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had set before himself, the more he felt the need of all the power that a thorough grasp of knowledge could give him. He believed himself led by heaven to be an educator, and was inspired with an earnest hope that, through the reform in the whole scope of education which he felt to be so necessary, he might be the chosen instrument to work out the regeneration of the nation ; but he had no weak enthusiast's faith in the all-sufficiency of such a call to fit him for the task. It was ever remarkable in him that, side by side with the mystic enthusiasm of the most exalted piety, he had the sober practical sense given by experience and scientific study ; and thus, although the cool rationalist would feel no sympathy with one part of his nature, and that the part which perhaps exercised the most influence on those who loved him, he could look only with respect on the profound conviction which gave the dignity and earnestness of a lofty aim to the hard labour of a life spent in acquiring and imparting knowledge. To Fröbel the universe was the living expression of God's thought ; the study of nature's laws, therefore, was the study of God's will ; and the complete harmony between the developed human faculties and external nature was the great purpose of human existence ; at once the work of education and the life of religion. It is on account of these views, which interpenetrated all he said and did and purposed, that the study of Fröbel's life is so important. If we studied his theories alone, we might fail to understand, or perhaps be half offended by, the tone that pervades them ; but when we follow the man through his labours and his struggles,

when we see him building up his own life as he would have built up the national life, seeking knowledge for himself as he sought to give it to others, because it was needed to satisfy some thirst of the soul, to round off some incompleteness in that perfecting of the whole being, which was the reasonable offering of man to his Creator—then we understand him, and each portion of his system becomes clear to us, not as a piece of mechanism that might be altered here or improved there, but as a living organism that can work and grow only when complete in all its parts.

The study of mineralogy had a special attraction for him, and he was very desirous to pursue it under Weiss at Berlin, and likewise to join the class of jurisprudence under Savigny. He hoped also to find there an opening for increasing his own scanty means, which could no longer suffice for his student's life at Göttingen. Accordingly, in the summer of 1812, he removed to Berlin, and there, as he had hoped, found employment in a school of the same kind as the learned institute at Frankfort which had been founded by Plamann, an earnest admirer of Pestalozzi, whose principles he had determined to extend from the middle-class schools to the higher. Fröbel was thus occupied when the French disasters in Russia struck the hour of deliverance for Germany, and Prussia, so heavily oppressed, and so steadily pursuing the means of revenge, called upon every man to take up arms against the oppressor. The king's proclamation, the personal call "To my people," was responded to with an enthusiasm which will ever mark this as one of the grandest moments in German

history. Then, as many have said, did the consciousness of the existence of a German nation first arise. Fröbel, who, like other men of peaceful pursuits—students, poets, and artists—was stirred by this call to a new duty, was also thrilled for the first time by this feeling of patriotism, coloured in his mind, as all things were, with the sense of his duty as an educator.

“I had,” he said, “a home, a land of my birth, but no fatherland. My own home made no call upon me. I was no Prussian, and so it happened that in my retired life the call to arms stirred me little. But something else there was which stirred me, if not with enthusiasm, yet with most steadfast determination, to take my place among German soldiers, and this was the pure feeling, the consciousness of being a German, which I honoured as something noble and sacred in my own mind, and desired that it might be unfettered and able to make itself everywhere felt. Besides this feeling, I was also moved by the earnestness with which I embraced my mission as an educator.

“I could, indeed, truly say that I had no fatherland; yet I could not but feel that every lad, every child who later should be educated by me, would have a fatherland, and one that required to be defended now when those children could not defend it. It was hardly possible for me to conceive how any young man capable of bearing arms could think of becoming an educator of children whose country he would not defend with his blood or his life. It was impossible for me to imagine how a young man who

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should not be ashamed then to hang back like a coward, could later, without shame, and without incurring the scorn and derision of his pupils, stir them to any great thing, to any action requiring effort or self-sacrifice. This was the second consideration that weighed in my decision. Thirdly, the call to arms seemed a token of universal need of the men, of the country, and the times in which I lived, and I felt that it was unworthy and unmanly not to struggle for such a universal necessity, not to bear one's own share of peril in the thrusting back of a general danger. Before all these considerations, then, every opposing view gave way, even that which belonged to the fact of the unfitness of my weak constitution for the trials of such a life."

Thus in April, 1813, Fröbel joined the other Berlin students, led by Jahn, and entered the famous volunteer corps of Lützow's "Black Riflemen," and served with them to the end of the war.

With his brief career as a soldier we have no concern. The great events of that war are known to all; its ultimate results have been worked out before our own eyes. But while Fröbel was following the fortunes of the field, he was forming intimacies which were to endure through all the peaceful labour of his after life.

Two Berlin students, much younger than himself, William Middendorff and Henry Langethal, became his comrades, and were irresistibly attracted by his character and conversation, and here by the camp fires of the wild volunteer corps was knit a friendship that bound these three men together for weal or woe

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in the pursuance of the highest purpose of the practical philosopher. In the younger men this feeling was mixed with a reverence which made them ever ready to follow where Fröbel led. It became that high and noble thing, *loyalty*; which, even in its lowest phases, excites the admiration due to generous devotion, but which given to the leader who impersonates a lofty ideal of action, stands foremost among the noblest things on earth. The whole power of a man's nature then goes out in love and service to one in whom he recognises his guide to whatever is highest and best in human life. Trial and difficulty do but make the devotion more ardent; and in hours of failure, perhaps of such weakness or error as are inseparable from all human enterprise, it seems reasonable even to abdicate for a time the independent exercise of reason, and still to follow without faltering the leader's banner. All the moral and intellectual worth of these two men, and of Middendorff in particular, was thus given to the service of the friend they revered as well as loved; and the affection born then, amid the free intercourse of an adventurous life, amid youthful excitement and daily peril, had but grown stronger and more tender when, after nearly forty years of struggle and labour, and often weary disappointment, Middendorff pronounced his touching oration over Fröbel's grave, and turned from it to continue his work.

The three friends were differently placed at that period, and seemed destined to different careers; yet after a time Fröbel's enthusiasm for education drew the others to his side. But this is anticipating. After

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the close of the war, Fröbel claimed the fulfilment of the promise made to him of an appointment in the mineralogical museum at Berlin, and resumed his studies there, but always with the object of completing his own fitness for an educator, and when offered a valuable post as mineralogist at Stockholm, he declined it as foreign to his educational purpose. This purpose was suddenly forced to take a practical form by the death of his brother Christopher, pastor of Griesheim, who was one of the many victims of a malignant typhoid fever that spread widely over Germany after the battle of Leipzig. He left a widow and children ill provided for; and Friedrich Fröbel felt at once that this was the occasion heaven sent to him to put his system of education into practice by undertaking the charge of his nephews. The widow gladly consented, and to her sons were subsequently joined those of the other brother, Christian Fröbel, and other lads from the neighbourhood. Thus in a peasant's house in the village of Griesheim, and later in the neighbouring village of Keilhau, was opened the first school upon that new method which its founder hoped would become the vivifying influence to regenerate the German nation, and which we still trust may transform the education of the future. It was the dream of years that Fröbel was beginning to realise. In 1807 he had, in a letter to his brother Christopher, laid down his cherished plan of a school: "Not to be announced with trumpet tongue to the world, but to win for itself in a small circle, perhaps only among the parents whose children should be entrusted to his care, the name of a happy family institution; . . .

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and discipline of the mental and physical powers through observation and active work. The young creature must be at home in its surroundings—learn to live, seek to understand outer and visible things, and to exercise its own creative faculty, before it is introduced to the inner world of thought, to symbols and abstractions, and made to gather up the fruit of other men's labour and experience. With regard to the second point—the unfolding of the human powers according to inner, or, as we may call them, organic laws—it lay at the core of his whole theory of education. He had watched development and gradual formation by the action of inward laws through all the realms of nature—in plants, in animals, and, lastly, in the forms of crystals, which seized powerfully on his imagination; and that the human creature was destined by the law of its being to develop in like manner possessed his mind as a revelation of Divine truth. Hence all systems of education that aimed mainly or solely at outward accretion, that trusted to pouring in instruction on the undisciplined mind, were to him false, and the only real system was that which assisted natural growth, which cultivated and strengthened the opening faculties, placing mental food within reach, and aiding the effort of the young creature to grasp it. The true educator's care was to study the nascent powers, and so to frame the surroundings that the active use of each and all in harmonious work should become a necessity and a pleasure."

All who have any acquaintance with ordinary school methods will appreciate from these few words the

immense chasm that separated and still separates them from Fröbel, and may perhaps understand better than he did, in his unworldly simplicity, the opposition, or the indifference more deadly than opposition, with which the educational authorities of the country met his efforts. He fondly believed himself called to be the apostle of a new era, and the world knew him not, and the new era has scarcely yet reached its dawn.

The primitive condition of the village of Keilhau so late as 1815 seems strange enough to us. "Although not poor," says Dr. Chr. Langehal, "the peasants had remained in the condition of the Middle Ages. Three houses retained the old form of Thuringian village architecture, and the date of 1532 was to be seen over the door of one of them. The church, with a pretty tower, was nevertheless more like a cellar than the house of God. In the midst of the village a water-course marked the street, and five springs kept the road always wet. Water lizards and other creatures abounded. The living of the peasants was very simple. As had been done 500 years before, the mayor still counted off on a notched stick the number of measures of wheat which each man was bound to pay as corn tax, or tithe. He gave forth orally to the peasants any new regulation of the Government; and in order to keep up a military appearance, a day watchman paraded the village with a broad halberd over his shoulder. The dress of the old man was what he had worn in his youth, and that of the women descended from mother to daughter." This antique simplicity in his sur-

roundings fell in right well with Fröbel's plans; simple fare, hardy habits, life in the midst of nature, was what he wished for his boys. Much of his teaching was given in the fields. Love for natural history and physical science was inspired, as the first knowledge was put within the children's own reach and their own minds led to observe and seek for more. The heavens and the earth thus become the boundless text-book in which the learner is taught to read.

Middendorff was the first of Fröbel's friends to join him. He had been a private tutor for a time while finishing his theological studies, and now they were completed he announced to his parents that their cherished wish of seeing him devote himself to the ministry could never be accomplished. It was a severe disappointment, but the young man was following his true vocation, and overcame all opposition. After a time, Langethal, whose destination had also been the University, followed the same course. Somewhat later, Barop, a friend and brother-in-law of Middendorff, joined them, and became a mainstay of the whole enterprise. The friendship between the masters produced a marked influence on the school. Hanschmann quotes an interesting letter describing the perfect harmony that reigned, and the affection and respect inspired among the boys, which seemed to render all outward forms of discipline needless. It was a loving family, as Fröbel had desired it should be; and his own marriage with a lady warmly devoted to his views, and, later on, the marriage of Middendorff and Langethal to two of his own nieces, drew the ties yet closer, and gave that feminine element to their

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whole life which was necessary to complete and harmonise it.

As an educational experiment the school was in great measure a real success, though it did not reach Fröbel's ideal. All mental requirements were richly provided for, and his own views of education carried out as far as time would allow, considering the imperative necessity of preparing the boys for the University; but the material wants were met with great difficulty, and in the poorest fashion. The friends cast in their lot together without stint or reserve, and Christian Fröbel also gave help; but even so, affairs did not prosper either at Griesheim or at Keilhau, whither they removed as soon as a house had been prepared. Fröbel was by nature a man in whose hands material interests could not prosper. He had no practical ability of that kind; and being at that time engrossed with the interest of carrying into effect for the first time the cherished views which had become a part of his very life, he was probably less fit than ever to calculate and to dwell upon prudential and economical considerations.

As a fact, although the number of scholars increased, the school never became a prosperous one while Fröbel administered its affairs; and he had also the disappointment of feeling that his hope of exercising a powerful influence on national education was fallacious. Envy and misrepresentation did their work here as everywhere, when new light and new enthusiasm meet old abuses and pedantic routine. The school held its ground, but it showed no signs of becoming the beginning of a wide

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Never, however, did leader or disciples lose heart or hope. Devoted to a great idea, they believed in its power to prevail ultimately, and every privation was endured, every sacrifice made, with cheerful alacrity. The more Fröbel struggled against opposition, and was forced to express his views in answer to opponents or to convince the indifferent, the more firmly did he grasp his central idea of education as development from within, following the course of all progress in nature and in the long education of mankind through the ages of the world's history. And the longer he was engaged practically in education, the more was he convinced that this development of human capacity could not be effected through a learned education alone, but that the active powers must be exercised productively in due proportion with the exercise of the receptive faculties in acquiring knowledge; and that without this simultaneous training a one-sided or a stunted growth must be the result.

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The most important feature of this new life was the gathering of women who flocked to hear his teaching. Some time before, he had issued his call to his countrywomen, in which he strove to rouse them to a sense of the holy mission of womanhood, not to be accomplished by mere tender care of children, but by intelligent educational culture. And nobly did many respond to his call; widows and maidens, the young and the middle-aged, those who had children, and those who sought to fit themselves to assist others in their heaven-appointed task, gathered round him in the village, and the village children were their pupils; and then his system of games and songs and exercises was gradually completed, and the old gray-haired man became the centre of a young and joyous life, full of hope and highest aspirations.

From some of those who knew him then, especially from Frau von Marenholtz Bülow, we have received many details of his life and work at this period, of his appearance and his manner, as well as of his opinions recorded in daily conversation; and if I had space I would willingly here have reproduced some of these recollections, but I must hasten on to the close.

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and then at last he would live in the country the self-ennobling life which had been his earliest, brightest, dearest wish."

It would lead us beyond our limits to attempt to examine how far his system may justly bear the name of the "New Education," which has been given to it by some German writers: I will only mention two points, that characterise it so essentially as almost alone to warrant its claim to the title. These are, the recognition of practical activity as an integral part of education, and the parallel of the mental growth of the human being with the development of all other organisms in nature. With regard to the first, Pestalozzi had attached much value to manual exercise and handicraft of various kinds, but rather as parts of physical training and technical preparation for life, especially among the lower classes; but with Fröbel all outward training had an inward co-relative; some mental faculty was always to be consciously brought into play, to be strengthened and directed aright, while the limbs were gaining vigour or dexterity. He did not value manual work for the sake merely of making a better workman, but for the sake of making a more complete human being. "His teaching rested," says Hanschmann, "on this fundamental principle, that the starting point of all that we see, know, or are conscious of is action, and therefore that education or human development must begin in action. Through what a man works out, is his inward being developed. Life, action, and knowledge were to him the three notes of one harmonious chord. Book study is ever in his system postponed to the strengthening

and discipline of the mental and physical powers through observation and active work. The young creature must be at home in its surroundings—learn to live, seek to understand outer and visible things, and to exercise its own creative faculty, before it is introduced to the inner world of thought, to symbols and abstractions, and made to gather up the fruit of other men's labour and experience. With regard to the second point—the unfolding of the human powers according to inner, or, as we may call them, organic laws—it lay at the core of his whole theory of education. He had watched development and gradual formation by the action of inward laws through all the realms of nature—in plants, in animals, and, lastly, in the forms of crystals, which seized powerfully on his imagination; and that the human creature was destined by the law of its being to develop in like manner possessed his mind as a revelation of Divine truth. Hence all systems of education that aimed mainly or solely at outward accretion, that trusted to pouring in instruction on the undisciplined mind, were to him false, and the only real system was that which assisted natural growth, which cultivated and strengthened the opening faculties, placing mental food within reach, and aiding the effort of the young creature to grasp it. The true educator's care was to study the nascent powers, and so to frame the surroundings that the active use of each and all in harmonious work should become a necessity and a pleasure."

All who have any acquaintance with ordinary school methods will appreciate from these few words the

immense chasm that separated and still separates them from Fröbel, and may perhaps understand better than he did, in his unworldly simplicity, the opposition, or the indifference more deadly than opposition, with which the educational authorities of the country met his efforts. He fondly believed himself called to be the apostle of a new era, and the world knew him not, and the new era has scarcely yet reached its dawn.

The primitive condition of the village of Keilhau so late as 1815 seems strange enough to us. "Although not poor," says Dr. Chr. Langethal, "the peasants had remained in the condition of the Middle Ages. Three houses retained the old form of Thuringian village architecture, and the date of 1532 was to be seen over the door of one of them. The church, with a pretty tower, was nevertheless more like a cellar than the house of God. In the midst of the village a water-course marked the street, and five springs kept the road always wet. Water lizards and other creatures abounded. The living of the peasants was very simple. As had been done 500 years before, the mayor still counted off on a notched stick the number of measures of wheat which each man was bound to pay as corn tax, or tithe. He gave forth orally to the peasants any new regulation of the Government; and in order to keep up a military appearance, a day watchman paraded the village with a broad halberd over his shoulder. The dress of the old man was what he had worn in his youth, and that of the women descended from mother to daughter." This antique simplicity in his sur-

roundings fell in right well with Fröbel's plans; simple fare, hardy habits, life in the midst of nature, was what he wished for his boys. Much of his teaching was given in the fields. Love for natural history and physical science was inspired, as the first knowledge was put within the children's own reach and their own minds led to observe and seek for more. The heavens and the earth thus become the boundless text-book in which the learner is taught to read.

Middendorff was the first of Fröbel's friends to join him. He had been a private tutor for a time while finishing his theological studies, and now they were completed he announced to his parents that their cherished wish of seeing him devote himself to the ministry could never be accomplished. It was a severe disappointment, but the young man was following his true vocation, and overcame all opposition. After a time, Langethal, whose destination had also been the University, followed the same course. Somewhat later, Barop, a friend and brother-in-law of Middendorff, joined them, and became a mainstay of the whole enterprise. The friendship between the masters produced a marked influence on the school. Hanschmann quotes an interesting letter describing the perfect harmony that reigned, and the affection and respect inspired among the boys, which seemed to render all outward forms of discipline needless. It was a loving family, as Fröbel had desired it should be; and his own marriage with a lady warmly devoted to his views, and, later on, the marriage of Middendorff and Langethal to two of his own nieces, drew the ties yet closer, and gave that feminine element to their

whole life which was necessary to complete and harmonise it.

As an educational experiment the school was in great measure a real success, though it did not reach Fröbel's ideal. All mental requirements were richly provided for, and his own views of education carried out as far as time would allow, considering the imperative necessity of preparing the boys for the University; but the material wants were met with great difficulty, and in the poorest fashion. The friends cast in their lot together without stint or reserve, and Christian Fröbel also gave help; but even so, affairs did not prosper either at Griesheim or at Keilhau, whither they removed as soon as a house had been prepared. Fröbel was by nature a man in whose hands material interests could not prosper. He had no practical ability of that kind; and being at that time engrossed with the interest of carrying into effect for the first time the cherished views which had become a part of his very life, he was probably less fit than ever to calculate and to dwell upon prudential and economical considerations.

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From some of those who knew him then, especially from Frau von Marenholtz Bülow, we have received many details of his life and work at this period, of his appearance and his manner, as well as of his opinions recorded in daily conversation; and if I had space I would willingly here have reproduced some of these recollections, but I must hasten on to the close.

Fröbel's life is in fact more fitted to be the subject of many papers than of one, but I am of necessity forced to make a rapid sketch of the whole, depriving myself of the help of the quotations and illustrations that would have given life to my scanty narrative.

Fröbel's second marriage took place in July, 1851; the lady he married had from early youth been a frequent visitor at Keilhau, and had taken an earnest share in all his first wife's labours for the common cause. Her affection and sympathy shed a calm happiness over the close of his existence, which he has touchingly described himself.

But once more sorrow and disappointment awaited him. Just when public attention appeared to be roused, and his views to be gaining ground, the Government at Berlin, without assigning any reason, passed a decree in August, 1851, forbidding any Kindergarten to be established within Prussian dominions; and so great was the influence of that power, and so easily were the fears of the lesser States excited when distant hints of democratic opinions were thrown out as the cause of the Berlin decree, that Fröbel soon met coldness or indifference where before he had received assistance and sympathy. This check may truly be said to have been his death-blow. Not all the peaceful content of his new married home, not the devotion of friends, or the practical success in his immediate surroundings, could bear him up against this destruction of his long-cherished hope that he might yet be the regenerator of national education.

The fervent lover of humanity saw his anticipations nipped in the bud, and age and toil had left him no power to react against the blow, though he remained the same outwardly, and worked to the end with unflagging energy. His seventieth birthday was kept in April, 1852, as a joyful festival by all who loved him, and he felt and responded to their love. But this was almost the closing scene; two months later the great heart that was all the warmer for friends and family, because it ever kindled for country and humanity, had ceased to beat; the voice that had always been heard uttering words of loftiest counsel and encouragement was silent; his native hills, the fields, the woods he had loved from boyhood, and where he had learned to worship God in studying the forms of nature, knew him no more. But true hearts and noble minds had caught up the echo of his words, the inspiration of his thoughts. One who had been loving and faithful from the first, and who survived him too short a time, Middendorff, spoke a funeral oration, which moves us deeply now as we read it, and from which I wish I had time to quote, since I fain would borrow words more powerful than my own to aid me in leaving with you before we part a deeper impression of what that man was, who laboured ceaselessly, and never knew a selfish aim; who read the secrets of human nature in the child, that he might train a more perfect manhood; who roused women, in the name of the nation and the race, to realise what was the power and the duty trusted to them by heaven; the man who was too much in advance of his time to be recognised as great

30 SHORT SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL.

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while he lived, and whose work, now spreading in all
lands, is the work which we have banded ourselves
together to forward among our own homes, as a new
hope for future generations of our own people.

FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL'S PERSONAL WORK IN
DRESDEN,

*Described by himself in letters to his Wife, Henrietta
Wilhelmina, née Hoffmeister.*

I.*

DRESDEN, January 17th, 1838.

Two words only to you, my own beloved wife, for yourself; that you and the others may, at least, hear something of me, I send at once, for you and all, my letter to Langenthal, to be forwarded to Burgdorf. You and Barop will take care to send it on as quickly as possible. It need not be prepaid. To-morrow I shall doubtless find means to send you something more; to-day there was not time to think about it, and I will not delay this letter any longer, that you may receive it, please God, at latest on Saturday, through Wilhelm Wolfram. When you have received it, I think it will be best that you should immediately

* The date of this letter is evidently wrong, for in speaking here of the Queen of Saxony's interest in one of his lectures, Fröbel is referring to facts detailed in Letter VII., bearing the date of January 9th, 1839. It has been thought better, however, to let it stand here as in the original.

send for Barop, who will be able to come to you then, that you may read and talk it over together. You will perceive from its contents that the Life* is striving both to strike down to a solid foundation and to unfold itself on all sides; as yet it is all in germ, in the process of development, but soon it will take a decisive form. My mind and soul go out joyfully towards the future, in confidence and trust in God. My heart thrills with the expectation that all my wishes and endeavours will be fulfilled with a far higher and larger fulfilment than I myself had dreamt of in earlier days. To my brother give this greeting: Old things are made new, they show forth the "Law," which ever reveals itself in the course of human effort worthily directed. When I wrote the "Education of Man" and the "Family as Educator," Harnisch, harnessed for war and wrathful, stood up against me. When I wanted to go to Halle, I was met by opposition as closely veiled as a nun. When I appeared in Wartensee, the anonymous writer in the Appenzell paper attacked me insidiously. The same kind of spiteful article has now come out in the *Allgemeine Leipziger Zeitung*. I have not yet read it, I have even been entreated not to read it; the fact, witnessed by hundreds, that the Queen kindly gave me, a stranger, an additional half-hour, when she had already given up two hours to me, that fact no one can contradict; perhaps it is that which has turned the good man's stomach, if he suffers from a weak stomach. I am

* Throughout these letters, this expression, "the Life," seems used by Fröbel to signify his theory of life and education.

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much pleased to find that this attack does not affect me like the earlier ones, and that all goes on with me as quietly and steadily as if nothing had happened. I have written to Berlin a letter which I think you would be delighted with, could you read it. Now, my dear, dear wife, a hearty farewell for to-day!

Yours, F. F.

II.

[DRESDEN, *December 12th*, 1838.]

MY DEAR WIFE,

Would to God that this letter might find you in a tolerable state of health, and on the way to improvement and gaining strength! Would that at the moment of my departure, hope, life-giving and restoring, had returned to you! What a strangely powerful feeling of union, of being one, comes with a parting! Why does not this feeling pervade and animate the whole of life actually spent together? How strongly does my longing for you draw me back to you! So strongly that I should instantly take my homeward way and hurry back to you, if real Duty did not withhold me! But as things now stand here, it would seem as if verily God had something that He would entrust to my care, were it for ever so short a time.

But I will not anticipate, and will, in the first place, give you in brief the story of my journey. As you will have seen from my little note from S——, the mail-coach, after a (to me) most tedious delay, started only at a quarter-past five from Saalfeld. It

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went first to Pörsneck, and between nine and ten o'clock we arrived at Neustadt on the Orla. Here we first got some solid food. Then we went on through the night to Mittelpölnitz and Gera, where we arrived between four and five o'clock in the morning. As we felt somewhat chilled, and the stove in the waiting-room was well supplied with fuel, its warmth kept us, and especially Frankenberg, lingering there, with the result that we had to leave behind untouched a most inviting breakfast of coffee, which we had intended to take in a neighbouring hotel. However, in Altenburg and the town of Gotha we made up for the loss, though even there we had not much time, but the beautiful Puffer could not but refresh us, and did so in the pleasantest way. We rushed up to the terrace nearest the castle to get a general view of the town. Frankenberg fetched for me the felt shoes which had been previously bought, and by that time it was twelve o'clock, the hour for our start from Altenburg. Then came a long stage of three and a half miles* to Rochlitz. As the horses had to stop halfway at Roth or Roda (a little village) for refreshment, we thought we would give our bodies some too. Village fare, cold sausages and pickled cucumbers, provided it, to which Frankenberg thought fit to add a cup of coffee, and I invited myself gladly to be his guest, by letting him order a second cup. In Rochlitz, a very handsome provincial town, we hurried to see at least the outside of the Church of Kunigund, which, with the exception of its tower, is of great antiquity; but the air was damp and cold, and we could give only a rapid

* Seventeen and a half English miles.

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glance at the venerable Gothic building, which I sorely regretted. It was too late to go inside, but I advise all who pass through Rochlitz not to neglect it. The church was built by the Empress Kuni-gund, and is thus over one thousand years old. Having returned to the coach waiting-room, which is also the dwelling-house and room of the post-master, Captain von Baltlar, we accepted his proposal to refresh ourselves with a good glass of genuine Forster which he set before us. Wishes and yearning—nay more than these, joy welling up from the depths of my heart—were borne with it to my lips. Oh, would that the feelings which overflowed my heart had brought *you* strength for the following night, a really refreshing sleep, and vigour in the morning. By the time half our bottle was disposed of, we were so refreshed, that instead of one glass each we took two; but the wine was itself good. It came from between the Main and Rhine, at the foot of the spur of the Taunus, and combined the qualities of both growths. We supped in the night at Waldheim, the frontier station, and towards midnight passed through Nossen on the Freiburg Mulde (Rochlitz is on the White Mulde) towards Dresden.

We arrived there in the morning, between eight and nine o'clock I believe. The luggage porter took us to the great Rauchhaus, which, he told us, though somewhat old-fashioned was otherwise a good inn. Our friend Herr Houpe said to us yesterday: "Here you are well cared for; you are as in a family, and the people are human and friendly;" and so we found and find it. In the evening we discovered that old Nösselt had also

lodged here this summer. This makes the house dear to us. But we shall have to take a private lodging if we remain here more than a few days, as Herr Houpe has strongly advised for the sake of cheapness ; although this is very cheap for an inn, and has also the advantage of being in the centre of the town.

Our first visit was to the chemist, Herr Houpe, who is still unmarried. He was out, and we were asked to return after dinner. Though his calling and business and the circumstances of his life make his work entirely different from mine, I found in him a man full of sympathy and universal human interests ; this increased my confidence in him every minute. I freely told him everything, my aims and objects, ways and means, and he took it all in thoughtfully and earnestly, as if it concerned his personal interests. From his general knowledge of men and his local knowledge, he was able, as from a height, to survey the whole ground, and to examine where solid support could be found. For this he quickly fixed on the family, and especially on the person, of the Privy Councillor von Schaarschmidt, who has a large and charming family, with a wife of rare motherly qualities, and together they devote themselves to their household and children. He works with the Minister Lindenau, and in this way, he thinks, the whole matter will be best managed. We considered besides the general conditions of Dresden, examining them carefully, with a view to the measures to be taken for our object. He invited us to go to his house again at three in the afternoon, that we might make a party to go to the large Garden, where a so-called extra concert

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is given in the evening, by the Musical Choir of the Body Guards, for an entrance fee of one silbergroschen. The music was good, and so was our conversation.

But I must go back: before we went the second time to Houpe, Frankenberg went to pay a visit to Peters. I would not go with him. Frankenberg found the family very pleased at his return, and we are invited there for this evening at six. While Frankenberg was with Peters, I walked up and down some streets, and when he rejoined me we went together to the establishment of Herr Blochmann, to ask when we could see the Director. We were told the best time would be this morning between eight and nine. We left word with the servant that we would visit him at that time; for Herr Blochmann was out, and I did not wish to see him then, as the clock was summoning us to Herr Houpe's. We went as agreed upon to the Garden. There, as I said before, to the accompaniment of harmonious music, we harmoniously discussed the whole subject, and Herr Houpe advised that I should go this morning early to Herr Geheime Regierungsrath v. Schaarschmidt, who lives only three doors off from his house, and whom he knows personally; that he should accompany me, and we should ask his advice, and his permission to play with his children in the family circle. Though Herr v. Schaarschmidt, as an official person, received us very calmly, shortly, and rather dryly—which I thought quite natural, it being also half-past eight in the morning—yet, after raising some objections, he became interested and for a moment quite friendly when, in answer to his question, "Now what is it you want of me?" (the

tone and meaning of which said, "What do you wish, or expect me to do in the matter?"), I said that, as we wished to place the whole subject before a family for examination, we wanted his permission to play with his children a quarter of an hour or longer. His fatherly heart was touched. He kindly consented at once, and proposed we should visit him to-day at three. I had to decline this, as I have not yet a sufficient number of games here. He said: "Well then, to-morrow at three, and if the toys have not come, the day after to-morrow." He proposed, if this first attempt was successful, to make another with a larger number. We quickly took our leave. He attached great importance to the opinion of Blochmann. I frankly confess I was not pleased at this; I should prefer that he should trust his fatherly heart, sound sense, and the impression made on his children, as well as the effect upon their lives. I then went with Frankenberg to a toy-shop, especially to see some building bricks, which were announced for sale, from five silbergroschen to five thalers, and also to find out what is to be had on the spot.

Herr Blochmann soon came to see me. He was jovial, friendly, kind, easy, well-mannered: I wished he had been less of all these, or at least with less artificiality. Pretension seems to me so ingrained in him that I fear, on account of the high estimation in which his opinion is generally held, he may prove our greatest and most persevering, though concealed enemy. With all his cordiality, he showed no real interest. He invited me for to-morrow at eleven, and then to dine with him next Sunday, "if I were still here." This addition sounded

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to me like a wish that I might not be. But I must now conclude quickly.

Houpe spoke of a lecture and demonstration of the games in the Teachers' Club. In short, as matters stand, this is what I wish. As all depends on the first impression made by the games, and on our winning the hearts of the children and the judgment of their parents, and as Frankenberg and I are too imperfect in the practice of them, my strongest wish is that Middendorff were already on his way here. He should lodge at Valentin's, quite independently of me and Frankenberg; we should thus be personally better prepared for the demonstration. If I had known as much at Blankenburg as I do here, I should have persuaded Middendorff to come with me. The Spirit alone can work now—and the Spirit of Truth. I am now going to Gesell, to-morrow to Valentin, this evening to Peters. Send me a line soon. Address to Houpe, chemist, on the Antonsplatz, or Mariengasse No. 15. The heartiest greetings to all. God give you strength. To-morrow I will write to Keilhau.

FR.

III.

DRESDEN, *December 14th, 1838, Morning.*

MY DEAREST WIFE,

May God have given you a peaceful and refreshing night, and may you now be enjoying a sound morning sleep. I long for news of you. How happy I should be if the postman were to come this moment, and bring me really quieting accounts of you !

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May these be already on the road, that I may soon have a cheering report of your health. But I have a glad, firm conviction, springing out of my life, my work and its results, and it is this: that your spirit, your peaceful blessing spirit, the pious wishes of your true loving heart, are always hovering over me, and praying to God for good fruit from my work. In my last (and first) letter from here to you, which I posted the day before yesterday, I told you of my safe journey and arrival here on Wednesday, my visit to and reception by Houpe, his careful consideration of my cause, and friendly introduction to Herr v. Schaarschmidt; as a result of this introduction, the permission of the latter to make a trial with his children of the games, and so on, to the visit of Herr Blochmann. If I am not mistaken, I left off there; this was on Wednesday, at midday. I now continue my report. After Herr Blochmann had left me, and I had dined, written, and posted my letter, I went to the teacher Gesell, who lives a long way off at the end of the New Town, and has an institution still further off for the employment and teaching of poor children. Of the institution I will write nothing, I can only tell you about it when we meet. The sight of a work conducted on such purely humane principles as those which animate Herr Gesell always does one good. The children were merry, active, and seemingly well-mannered, in spite of the poverty of their appearance.

I found Gesell a small man with an open cheerful countenance, happy in his occupation and its blessings, which all touched me; he has a very capable helpmate. But I must break off and turn to my own affairs. We

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consulted as to the possibility of our meeting again. He knew little of my subject, because the papers which were intended for him by Frankenberg had not been delivered to him by Herr Löwe. At six we went to Dr. Peters, who is mathematical master in Herr Blochmann's school. At first we saw only his wife, with her two little daughters, Julie and Sophie, children of three and five. On her asking whether I had been in Dresden before, there followed, after her husband had come in, some talk on our life in the corps of Lutzow, and as Herr Peters takes great interest in Körner and in the corps itself, one question succeeded another, and the conversation lasted till eight. It was very animated, and perhaps this was the best way for us to become better acquainted; it was settled that Frankenberg should pay a second visit next morning (Thursday) to play with the children, and that we should all meet again to take coffee together from two to three. Peters and his wife are South Saxons. If I am not mistaken, Peters was born in Hamburg or Bremen. He came to Osnabrück when his education began. He may probably have made the acquaintance of his nice wife there, for she is a native of Osnabrück, therefore a Westphalian. Here you have her altogether as she is, with her dark, piercing eyes, her calm cheerfulness, her genial activity, the way in which she treats her children, in short, the delightfulness of her companionship as wife and mother—the completeness of her family life. He seems to me almost younger than she. This family carries weight, on account of its solidity of thought, and it was for this that I stayed

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so long there, and shall often go again. We came home tired, and after a hearty good-night to you, I went to sleep.

Thursday (yesterday). The box arrived. I went to the ever-helpful Houpe to ask him where it had better be sent. He at once gave up his sitting-room to me for unpacking and arranging the things, as he does not use this room in winter. This was a great boon to me; I can now unpack and arrange undisturbed. He sent for the box. Time had passed in settling all this, and the hour had come for us to go to Dr. Blochmann. I found him in his room, and was heartily received by him; he then showed me his whole kingdom, his whole world, a real kingdom and world to boot, all well ordered and on a grand scale. I cannot stop to give details. The picture of the house which you will find among my books, on the right-hand side of my writing-table, will tell you all, if you reflect that princes and counts have lived and are still living there as pupils, and that the masters also teach the Royal Princes. Barop can tell you more. It was half-past twelve when we had finished the round which we began at eleven, although we had hurried through many parts, as for instance, through the class-rooms.

Hitherto I had not found it possible to interest the director in my undertaking; but now I seemed to succeed in doing so, and he understood it very justly as being *propaedeutical* — a preparatory training institution for all later teaching and even educational establishments;—but he did not grasp its deeper human and humane importance. The fact that Herr Geheime Regierungsrath v. Schaarschmidt had shown

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sympathy with the cause seemed to have a decided effect on him, as well as our having an introduction to Frau Geheimrätin and Oberhofmeisterin v. Miltitz. He finally presented me to his wife, telling her at the same time that he had invited me to dine with them next Sunday "as an old friend." She took this as if her position had accustomed her to such announcements. We parted with expressions of social cordiality (I cannot describe it better), and I hurried home to dine. It was a quarter past one and at a quarter to two we were expected at Dr. Peters', and the box was not yet opened. Frankenberg attended to this while I ate something, and by three o'clock we reached Dr. Peters'. To-day we soon began. The children were rather shy at first; but the sympathy of their parents and the object of it soon aroused their curiosity. All quickly brightened up, and I ended by asking the father and mother to become children with us, in order to show them how the games were carried forward into the business of life. Parents and children were equally pleased, and the interest of the former was aroused and strengthened in the highest degree. I said that we were invited to go to Herr v. Schaarschmidt's at three to show the games to his children. We then found that the two families were on intimate terms, especially the ladies, so that Frau Peters would have accompanied us with her little daughter if the eldest had not been confined to her room by indisposition. It was agreed, however, that this afternoon some of the Peters family should come to Herr v. Schaarschmidt's to see the further course of the games. We then went to Herr v. Schaar-

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schmidt's. We were led to the lady's wing of the house, and at once asked to go in. The lady of the house received us in a most genial, friendly, and sympathetic manner, as also Frau v. Beulwitz had previously done; but with less ceremony and more of frank, motherly feeling.

A small table before the sofa was surrounded by chairs, which were soon occupied by four nice children, behind whom their father also took his place. Timidity struggled with interest in the children's minds. Let me leave out the details; enough that the healthy and well-adapted nature of the occupations attracted the father and mother. The games particularly won the heart of Bernhardt, a boy of from four to five years old. Clara, the eldest, about eight, was full of interest, and her eyes sparkled the whole time. Elise, on my right, the youngest daughter, younger I think than Bernhardt, threw her whole soul into the games, and Mathilde, the second daughter, gave me some astonishing answers. The result was that the Herr Geheimrath seemed quite satisfied, promised me his heartiest sympathy in all my wishes for the cause, and said I could dispose of his younger children (for he has a family of twelve, of whom the youngest, Lina, is one and a half years old), for further trial and practice of my games. We left them between five and six in the evening, having exhibited the games up to the fourth. I left one box of red balls with its description, one green without, the third game (spheres and cubes) with the description, and one game and drawing of fourth gift, game and gift five, with drawing, as

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there were five children, and I saw very well that each wished to have one of the games. Bernhardt offered at once to take care of the box for Lina, and took possession of it. On leaving, I hastened to give our faithful Houpe an account of our success, and I then went home, to write to Barop on the necessity which I feel more even to-day than yesterday, that Middendorff should come at once, by mail-coach as far as Leipzig and from there by rail, because there is much to be done here, and the foundations to be laid for a wide-spreading work. I hope that my letter has, by now, reached Keilhau, and that Barop or Middendorff will come to you to hear more; it is on this account that I to-day describe the further success of our work.

IV.

DRESDEN, *Saturday, 22nd December, 1838.*

God bless you, my dear wife, and the heartiest thanks for your dear letter brought by Middendorff, as well as for that I received some days ago, which I hope I acknowledged and thanked you for. Saw Middendorff this morning for the first time, though he arrived yesterday, as he is staying with his old, true friend Valentin, which will make his stay here more pleasant to him.

To-day I hired rooms for Frankenberg for a month, but he will probably stay here longer, as our cause has met with an attention and interest which far surpasses all I could have expected; but, as must be clearly understood, all depends on the examination

of it by those who are interested in it. This examination, however, is so general, and is carried on by many with so much zeal and enthusiasm, that I have only to work so that the words of these men may be confirmed by deeds; these deeds again excite fresh enthusiasm, or at least true-hearted sympathy, so that the whole grows like an avalanche, almost without my help, and I shall soon be as little able to control it as the child who makes a large snow-ball, which, being set in motion almost imperceptibly, rolls on continually towards the earth's centre, *i.e.*, down the precipice. Now for a few facts.

This morning I shall receive from Kammerherr v. O., through Frau v. Reiska, the kind permission to hold exercises in the school for sixty to eighty little children, on the Viehweide, and to continue them for fourteen days. This morning Middendorff came as appointed; I was so occupied with Professor Graft, an eager inquirer, that I could not go with him to the Viehweide. Middendorff took my place there. He was again to have represented me in the afternoon with the children of Herr Schaarschmidt, but he was detained by his friend Valentin.

In forty-eight hours I am to receive from Kammerherr v. O., either verbally or in writing, the direct permission of the Princess to make preliminary trials in the three schools for little children here, for which public invitations will be sent by men of high reputation. Besides this, from four to six family associations will be formed. So you see, dear wife, we were called, and have come like labourers and reapers, to a ripe harvest: this is for your Christmas

feast, for you and all, even as we have been invited here to a true Christmas feast for nearly one hundred children. God strengthen and bless you.

As regards F. B., I will write to you later. In from eight to fourteen days' time all that is of most importance will be decided. I will write at latest after Christmas, so that you may certainly have one more letter from me this year. I hope that everything will work in the new year for the good and blessing of all, and according to the secret wish of their hearts. Barop should not keep the letter for Langenthal long, and should add to it an extract from Middendorff's letter, or a copy written by Friedrich. Kindest greetings to Louise. I will fetch my Christmas present myself. I had not time to buy myself even a gingerbread, though it nearly dropped into my mouth.

Yours, F. F.

V.

DRESDEN, Sunday, December 23rd, Christmastide,
Half-past Two in the Afternoon, 1838.

MY DEAR WIFE,

I added a few lines yesterday to Middendorff's letter to his Albertine, and I hope you will receive them from Keilhau as an insignificant Christmas present; but I cannot make a better use of my half-hour of leisure than in writing either to you, and through you to our dear friends in Keilhau, or to the faithful Langenthal, whose fame again reaches me here in Dresden from Leipzig. I choose the first, because I think of writing to Langenthal of the results I

hope for in the first days after Christmas. For you, for your self-sacrificing devotion, this is the chief result. It appears almost as if all had been prepared for my coming and the carrying out of my work; all goes forward calmly and quietly and almost spontaneously, and each point I take up produces at once further practical results. But of course we need, for all this, a working centre, and a man who will fight the battle through, with and for us, or at least an energetic persevering man, to be our representative and advocate. Such a man is Dr. Löwe, of whom Frankenberg said and I think truly, this morning, that he is, for the work here, what Riz was for that of Burgdorf and Langethat. Doctor Löwe is also a man of calm, firm and decided action in word and deed, who in all circumstances goes straight to the point with the fewest and most decisive words; and, besides, he has great personal and local knowledge of the relative positions of people to each other, and to the work we wish to carry out.

"A good cause," he says, "must not go begging," but he spent all yesterday morning in preparing the way for it, and bringing it to the knowledge of the most important people. "We must exhibit the subject to these people," he said, "from the point of view of the place and country, otherwise they will think directly that the speaker is seeking his own advantage, and then they will have neither means nor understanding to help his cause. You," addressing me, "cannot have this local knowledge, and therefore I (Löwe) will introduce the subject and present you to these people." So yesterday he went to Herr Geheime-

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Kirchenrath Schulze (to whom, I may say in passing, I am referred on all sides); Schulze has the Department of Public Worship in the Ministry of the Interior. The first result was that he invited me to go to him to-day, between eleven and twelve. I went punctually, and the servant had orders to show us in at once. Frankenberg and I stayed there till a quarter to five. I wished to take my leave several times, but he kept me, saying he had time to-day.

He said besides that he could not in his official position do anything for the cause, as children before the school age are not subject to national education, but are left to home care and benevolent societies, in short, to private enterprise; but, so far as his office and occupations allowed, he would give his utmost attention to the subject. It was very noteworthy to me, that when I went to him, he had just been reading an account of my work and undertaking in the *Allgemeine Schulzeitung*, which is published in Dresden. I could not have been introduced to him at a better moment than when I had, just before my entrance, been recalled to his memory. He took note of my address, and of the hour when he could be present at our games with the children of Herr Schaarschmidt; he also advised me to present myself to the Minister of the Interior and of Public Worship, Herr v. Carlowitz, to whom he would himself speak of me at a Council to be held next day. He also recommended me to visit the Director of the school of the Society "zu Rath und That" (of which he, Herr Schulze, is President), as he was an energetic

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young man; also to visit the Court Chaplain, Dr. Ammon. You see, dear wife, the confirmation of what I said yesterday. He wished the cause every blessing and a prosperous course, and he added that a system built on the foundation I had indicated must have both. I went yesterday evening late, out of gratitude, to Dr. Peters to thank him for his active sympathy, and tell him the present position of affairs; he was led in the course of conversation to say that he would also bring the subject under the notice of a certain Countess Vitzthum v. Esenek, a President of the Ladies' Society, and a lady of great benevolence, with whom he should have an opportunity of speaking one of these days.

Yesterday morning—or did I write you this yesterday?—Professor Grahl, a painter, came to see me. He is the same man to whom the Princess of Schaumburg-Lippe kindly gave Frankenberg an introduction. When Frankenberg took this letter to him it happened accidentally (?) that the governess of Prince John's children was just then with him; he said at once that he would take the opportunity to speak with her on our subject, and thus introduce it to the notice of the Royal Family. He now told me that he had spoken with Prince John himself about it. Herr Grahl stayed with me from nine to twelve with only a short interruption. He made me explain up to the fourth game to him, and said he should interest several of his friends in the cause. He himself bought all the four games with their supplements. The chief topic of our conversation was the desirability of establishing a normal school in Dresden, as a place where Nature,

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Art, and Science, if not to a very advanced degree, are equally cultivated. He invited us to go to him at all times, and consult with him. One of the coincidences I alluded to before is, that Herr Valentin, with whom Middendorff is staying, is a relation (first cousin) of Schaarschmidt's; whether this will be of any use remains to be seen.

Christmas Eve, One o'clock in the Afternoon.— Good-morning and good-day to you at the same time, my dear wife. God grant that this letter may find you in tolerable health. Just as I had written the above to you yesterday, Middendorff came in to go with me to the Gewandthaus, or rather to the great hall in that building, to see the Christmas feast which was given, I hear, to over 1,400 poor school-children. The hall may be more than 200 feet long, it has 16 or 18 windows on one side (a window and a pilaster occupy 12 feet of space); the breadth perhaps is 50 feet or more. The presents were laid upon two long tables down the room, and one across it. There were Christmas cakes, apples, clothes, books, toys, all apparently suited to the wants of those who received them. The room was lighted by many tapers on a great number of Christmas-trees placed at moderate distances from each other on the tables, and by divers chandeliers and sconces. I will leave the description to the poetical Middendorff, and will only say that the ceremony consisted of the performance of instrumental music, the singing of a choral song, then a speech from a clergyman, and then another choral song, in the presence of several

hundred spectators, though the entrance-fee was four and six sgr. The Queen, too, and several members of the Court were present. It was touching to see the delight of the children on entering the hall and seeing their presents. I have already told you that Frankenberg and I had been to the Christmas feast at three schools for little children here, each school containing about 80 or 100 children, as well as that the Princess was present at them all, and gave a separate present to each child, picture-books to the boys, and bags to the girls. You see, my dear wife, that there reigns here a special care for children, such as I have not met with either at Berlin or at Frankfort. It is also the custom here in many private schools to give the children their presents all together. The parents send their presents for their own children to the school, hoping to add to their pleasure by their sharing it with others; I suppose, too, that the parents themselves are present, as were also yesterday the male and female teachers of the schools of which children received presents. Each master or mistress headed the procession of his or her pupils. From there we went out, but singly, as our positions separated us, to a great concert which was given for the benefit of the poor here in the theatre. The theatre was crowded, as a pianist was to play, who is as yet unsurpassed, a certain Thalberg. I will leave M. to report on this also, and will only say that his playing combined incredible execution with a simplicity and clearness which could almost be called transparency. He seemed

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almost to make the instrument sing; one often forgot that it was a stringed instrument one was listening to; and in the most rapid passages, when the fingers seemed to glide over the keys, each tone was quite distinguishable. But, as I said, M. will tell you more. A female singer with an alto voice, a tenor, and three basses sang. (I must now go to Herr Consistorialrath Walch; it is two o'clock.)

On the dear Christmas Feast.—Although on this blessed Christmas Day I seem to have found the seed-ground, soil, and foundations for my system of training infants, and though there has arisen a shadowy prospect of the possibility that my present sojourn here may be the means of attaining my best and highest aim—the careful education of the earliest childhood becoming the common mission of many individuals and societies and even cities—yet I take up my pen sadly, because I cannot spend this Christmas time bodily with you and with the dear people at Keilhau. Because I make such sacrifices with so much submission to the law of necessity, no one guesses, much less does any one know and believe, how much I suffer from them in secret, and with what melancholy longings they fill my heart. I could wish that many could feel with me, and recognise what privations and sacrifices, what trouble and labour it costs to pave the way for the appreciation of a view of life not generally accepted, but of the truth of which I cannot doubt, and which has grown with my growth.

It strikes me at this moment, that just as I have had to buy the founding of the work here at the cost of my Christmas with you, I had to sacrifice being present at the marriage of Barop and Emilia, for the sake of my work in Switzerland. May the result of the latter be of good augury for the present labour.

Thus keeping Christmas in spirit and desire with you, dear wife, and with all in Keilhau and Blankenburg, I will now continue my narrative where I broke it off yesterday.

At two o'clock I went to visit Herr Consistorial or Kirchenrath Walch, under whose superintendence the whole school district of Dresden is placed. I must here refer to a strange thing that happened to me with him. When I went to his house in the morning, I found there were two bells to the door in the square. I chose that on the left, because the one on the right seemed to me to go straight into Herr Walch's room, and I did not wish to enter unannounced. I had hardly pulled the bell-handle, when he stood before me ready to go out. It was agreed that I should come again at two. I now thought myself sure not to come upon him unawares by ringing the right-hand bell, yet the hall door opened, and there was the Herr Consistorialrath in his fur dressing-gown before me, which seemed to affect him rather unpleasantly. But I could almost interpret this as a sign that we were to meet each other freely and informally, and to enter at once into our subject, and so it turned out. He was, in general, very much interested, promised to give his attention to the matter, and to be present as soon as possible at the

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exercises at Schaarschmidt's. I did not ask for more, in fact I did not even ask so much, having only intended by my visit to perform a duty called for by the situation. On coming away and turning a corner, I unexpectedly met Dr. Blochmann ; I do not know if it was on account of our sudden meeting, or if he intended it before, but he invited me at once to dine to-day at his house with Frankenberg, at half-past twelve.

When I got home, I heard that Herr Ruck from Würzburg had asked for me, and that he was coming again after two. He came with Alphons, and when soon after Middendorff came in, whom I did not think Herr Ruck knew, the latter was quite astonished, having left him eight days ago at Keilhau. At three, I was to have seen Herr Kammerherr von O. Byrn (so he writes his name), but he put me off till to-day at two. Herr Ruck, to whom I returned at my inn, also knows Herr Schaarschmidt and Herr Theodor Holl (whose real name is Winkler), to whom he brings masonic greetings from Consistorialrath Nonne, in Hildburghausen. He hoped this would give him the opportunity at the next lodge-meeting (28th of the month), to mention to those gentlemen his connection with us and with Keilhau, and his satisfaction with it.

Theodor Holl is the editor of the *Abendzeitung*, which is much read here and in Germany. Men's relations to each other become many-sided here. Herr Ruck is certainly not lacking in good-will. At least he said to me : "You will soon see what comes of it." The intention at all events is laudable. I was

still sitting with Ruck (Frankenberg had gone out) when Herr Wilhelm Krause, an advocate of this place, and second son of Professor Krause, came in with the purpose of inviting Frankenberg, but as he did not find him, he invited also Middendorff and me to the Christmas-tree of his sixteen months old child. I saw there many details and phenomena of children's lives, which encouraged me to continue on my way in all earnestness in my system of educating children. Middendorff and Frankenberg went from eleven to midnight to the Catholic mass. Middendorff and I had left the Krauses' earlier than Frankenberg. I then remained at home to protect my chest from the raw air.

This morning Frankenberg gave me the following account of what had happened in that family, a few hours after we left, which shows how near is death to us all. About ten the maid came in great alarm to the room, and called in a low voice to Herr Krause. They could hear screams from the child that had lately been so merry. A thick smoke, which made even the men start back, met them on opening the door; and then it appeared that in the room where the child was *asleep alone*, the maid had put a coverlet on a table near the stove, which was still alight, to dry; both coverlet and table were burnt, and the fire had reached the door-posts, so that the dear child—who is named Carl, after his paternal grandfather—was near being suffocated. A jug of water soon removed all danger. Just before this, some one present had been speaking of fire. To-day the wife of Dr. Peters told me that yesterday while she was

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busy with Christmas preparations, her dear Julie fell on her head from the sofa, but was not hurt.

As I was very busy and excited this morning, and the air was very raw, I prudently remained at home, and left the intellectual enjoyment to be derived from Ammon's sermon and the music in the Catholic church to my friends. Herr v. Ammon, I hear, spoke of the care of children's lives.

At half-past twelve, Frankenberg and I went to Blochmann's, where there was a great gathering of masters. At two I went to Herr Kammerrath v. O. Byrn, from whom I heard that the Princess had granted her permission that I should make further experiments in the schools for little children under her protection. To-morrow morning at nine I am to go again to Herr v. O. Byrn. In the afternoon I went to see Middendorff at Valentin's, where he is very comfortable in the simple homely life of the family. In the evening we worked together till seven. Now Middendorff has gone home to read aloud to the family. Thus, my dear wife, my whole life and doings are before you up to this moment. I will now try to recall and put on paper, what occurred to me during the day, as to details in the use, intimate connection and further development of the games.

My own dear wife, even if my stay in Dresden had produced absolutely no apparent effects, my gain as regards the development and growth in my own mind of the leading idea and its immediate application even in the smallest detail is so important that, if I could communicate it to Langethal in Switzerland, I

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should not consider ten times the cost of the journey too much for it. Now, dear wife, I have discovered (what I was unconsciously seeking) all that is required for gaining a hold on the child, for its education and for what contributes to it. I have discovered immeasurably more than I expected, and all in the simplest, most child-like way. You see, dear wife, this is the effect of the call for practical application and action, of the variety and quantity of material, and of the great number and different natures of the children brought before me. Such a number of thoughts often come to my mind, that I can scarcely work out their application all round even for myself. And I have not yet gone beyond the ball. At home, I have often been oppressed by not being able to apply and make use of what was working in my mind. Now I know what I wanted, and how to apply it. Middendorff was and is delighted at what Frankenberg has told him of the progress in our simple games; and yet the latter does not know anything of what I have discovered in the last few days and to-day.

If God gives His blessing to the general use of these occupations and games in such a large town as Dresden, a new race of men must arise, at least in the third generation. I cannot tell you how dear the children seemed to me in their games; so calm, so sensible, like little angels, and yet you know they are the result of anything but angelic circumstances. That you may more or less understand me as regards the games, I will put down a series of songs which accompany them. This will explain to you the course of education I contemplate:

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The ball as an object.—"The little ball is too pretty, I should like to look at it all over." From this a whole series of games is developed, for example : I. "The little ball will wander from one hand to another." II. 1st part—"The little ball likes to wander from one hand to the other." 2nd part—"And wish you a good-day ! good-day!" III. 1st part—"The little child too likes to wander." 2nd part—"And wish you a good-day ! good-day!" The children answer, "Good-day," etc. 3rd part—With giving of hands. 4th part—The child must relate something of its wanderings ; it asks everything it meets : "What are you ?"—*e.g.*, The bridge over the Elbe, the Christmas-tree, the avenue, an animal. After the child has thus "wandered," he must describe what he has seen : hence attention, reflection, memory, etc. In the wishing good-day and giving of hands, good manners.

Man, or parts of him, as the object : 1. 1st part—"My hand too I must examine, I will look at it now." 2nd part—"If it is clean and pure I shall be glad," etc. Action as an object of observation : 2. "I will also examine what I do ; if I feel it is just, or true, or right, or beautiful, and pure, I shall be glad," etc. So, further on : *My thoughts, my speech, my joy, my feelings*, etc. *My character, my heart*. 3. I will examine what I wish (will) : *My will shall always be just, and true, and clean, and pure. What do you wish ?*

Thus you see how, starting from the ball, with its unity of form, its distinctness and simplicity, we can proceed to take hold of, and ennoble the whole life of the child. Again, 1. The ball moves easily :

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“*Bim baum, bim baum,*” etc. 2. I, too, move easily, “*bim baum.*” (At the same time rocking from one foot to the other.) My arm, my leg, and my hand, here and there, or up and down. My eye moves easily here and there. What *do* you see? What *did* you see? My mind, my thoughts move easily. What did you think of?

This, dear wife, I send you for your Christmas present. You will understand me from these indications.

Frau v. M. is better, but not yet quite well; I was therefore quite prepared to be quietly dismissed after delivering my letter of introduction; but all happened differently. After a few minutes the servant came out, took our coats, and showed us to the ante-room, saying that Herr v. Miltiz was also at home, and would soon come as well as his lady. She appeared first, took us into the drawing-room, and her husband soon joined us. She introduced us to him as bringing a letter from the Princess of Schaumburg-Lippe. An inquiry about her began the conversation. As a proof of her being well, I said she had lately been at Keilhau, and that she was, in some sort, the cause and origin of my being here, through her general sympathy with, and interest in the teaching of children, and particularly of infants. We had thus reached the very heart of the matter, in which he, no less than his wife, showed great interest. We were only an hour with them, and yet the result was the following: What can be done for a trial of the system? When and how can it be brought to the notice of Prince

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John and the Queen, who is the Patroness of almost all ladies' societies, especially in the mountain districts? How are they to be induced to have the subject explained to them? How is it to be managed that a trial of its application should be made? Where are the best rooms to be had? etc. etc.

You see, my dear wife, no time was lost on ifs and buts, the questions were all directed to the attainment of our object. To-morrow morning I shall send some games as gifts to the Ladies' Society. These gifts are often sold for a high price. I shall add that when the purchasers have children of appropriate ages, I am prepared personally to explain the use of the game. Houpe also advised me to say this, and the addition has been received with favour. I shall also send No. 1 sample of games, 1, 2, and 3 of gifts, with a copy of the *Sontagsblatt* to Herr v. Miltiz, that he may lay them before the Prince.

But what is the result of all this? The work is to be submitted to a thorough examination on a large scale. There will be a trial, perhaps, in one of the infant schools, one before the Society of Teachers, to which all the head masters and principals of educational institutions in Dresden belong, as well as all the chief clergy, so that its opinion carries great weight, perhaps one before the magistrates, to try and obtain a room for experimental application, perhaps also one before members of the Royal Family, and even the Queen herself. Now I feel that I and Herr Frankenberg cannot do all that is required

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in the way of exercising and interesting the children, and entering into, and drawing out their lives; and I therefore wished that Middendorff should come to me again as quickly as possible.

I intimated this to him in a few lines written in the greatest haste. I only hope the letter was not too late for the post, and is already in Barop's or Middendorff's hands.

M. must bring with him . . . and what I specially want are the songs, the fresh appropriate songs in most frequent use, which are the very soul of the games of motion.

If my letter reaches you in time, my dear wife, Middendorff might perhaps leave Saalfeld on Wednesday evening and be here early on Friday. If he started on Sunday week, he would reach this on the following Tuesday. But I think he would come quite as quickly from Weimar, whence a diligence starts daily after midnight.

I must now hastily conclude for to-day. I long greatly for news of you, dear wife. One word would suffice. Satisfy my wish soon. If, as I hope is not the case, you cannot write, let Louise send me word how you are. Address "Fröbel—care of Houpe, Antonsplatz—Dresden." Greetings to Louise. In my haste I forgot to say this in my last letter.

Send my greetings to Herr Unger, and say that he would do me a great favour if he would send me one or two dozen copies of "Forms of Life—for No. 5," by Middendorff, so that I may have something complete at least on that side.

If some supplements to the *Sontagsblatt*, vol. 2,

table 1, and especially 11, were ready, it would be a great boon to me to receive them by Middendorff.

I just hear that we are to go to-morrow morning at ten to Herr Schaarschmidt.

Herr Grupe came to see us to-day. Louise (from Dresden) has still a situation in the neighbourhood of Dresden.

God grant, and this is the most important of all, that this letter may find you well, or at least as well as your state allows. The warmest greetings from me and Frankenberg to you all. Let my thanks be conveyed to the Princess, for there will certainly be occasion and opportunity to do so.

It is painful to me to say farewell in writing, but it must be. The clock summons me.

Yours in life and death,

F. F.

VI.

DRESDEN, 3rd January, 1839.

Less suffering for you, my dear wife, and a cheerful heart, are my best wishes for the New Year.

You will have been surprised and perhaps anxious at receiving no letter from me since the New Year; but my time has been so taken up, sometimes indeed needlessly and uselessly, that it was with difficulty I could get any free time for quiet thought, and then only by sacrificing such higher enjoyments as the

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hearing of noble sermons on these Holy Days. (Not to mention more worldly pleasures, such as going to the theatre.)

My heart longs for you. I have never before felt this longing so intensely as now, so that if the state of our cause allowed of it, I would start at once to come to you. But the business must now be carried through, and never before have all things so combined towards it. The feeling of the public is so wonderfully interested and even excited about it, that I may really say it is now a question of life or death. I do not think I am at all exaggerating in saying that there are now few people of any weight in Dresden society, who have not become acquainted with the subject, or to whom myself, led, as it were by the hand of fate and circumstance, have not made it known. You must excuse my not giving you names at present. All this will go for nothing and vanish like a soap-bubble, if the explanation of the whole subject which I am invited to give next Monday, January 7th, in the Hall of Natural History (Councillor Reichenbach's lecture room), which is already announced in the *Dresden Public Advertiser*, does not produce any favourable results. The interest in the subject, and the excitement concerning it which circumstances have brought about, make its fate in Dresden, first of all, but also in Leipzig, all Saxony, and perhaps Germany, depend on the success and effect of this lecture. May God grant His blessing upon it! But even if the result should be unfavourable, I am glad of this opportunity of bringing the subject before a public capable of examining it, and entitled to do so. If I

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could succeed in arousing and maintaining in a large audience, the interest and sympathy which, I may say, has always attended my private conversations, the road to a public recognition would be open. But why should I trouble you with suppositions and possibilities? Next Monday, at six in the evening, or between five and six, the fate of my cause will be decided. I would gladly have been quite silent on the subject till then, but that you would have been necessarily anxious. On Tuesday then, or at latest on Wednesday, you will hear something definite, and perhaps, if I have spoken and fought ill for my cause, I may start on Tuesday or Wednesday for Leipzig. If, on the contrary, the imperfect demonstration does not injure the interest felt in the subject, I shall then at all events know better what I have to do further. Why must everything in this life pass through definite, restricted forms, before it can be, I will not say recognised in its truth, but stamped with truth's seal? Why is a measured and formal speech, before a measured and formal audience, necessary to show forth, confirm and prove the truth which each individual had already seen, confirmed and proved before? But questioning is useless. It must be done, and therefore not a word on the subject, or on my work here, for all has been and is naught if it bears no fruit.

Now to the most important and dearest subject. My heartiest thanks for your dear letter. It moved me to tears of love, gratitude, and devotion. May Almighty God, who can do all things, who is mighty even in the weak, strengthen you in your weakness. O God, hear my prayer! Farewell till our near,

joyful, and thankful meeting. I must now return to my work. Warmest greetings to all.

We three began the year quietly with the dear and noble family of Professor Löwe, his wife and sister. The warmest wishes for your welfare were expressed in simple, feeling words. It was the same on the following evening, which Middendorff and I spent with the homely Valentin family, and we breathed heartiest greetings to be wafted to you and my far-distant home, on the clouds, the messengers of the air. Yesterday evening, too, (three such charming evenings in succession!) we spent with the venerable Tiedge, an old man of eighty-six, to whom we were introduced by kind, warm-hearted Reichenbach, and I thought of you during the serious, genial conversation we had together.

When I was leaving he offered me his cheek to kiss, and said: "We shall soon meet again." In the course of conversation he said: "You are doing and carrying into effect what I wished to do. Your work is more than mine." Of course I denied this.

Consider this as a tiny, tiny New Year's greeting. Earlier in the evening Reichenbach said: "We three are at one in this with another gray-headed man, a lawyer. The thing comes from the depths of human life."

Yours,

F. F.

VII.

DRESDEN, 9th January, 1839.

MY DEAREST WIFE,

You will forgive this first tarrying with you in the joyful New Year. Such a beginning is serious, and requires seriousness even in externals, and indeed my life in these days has been very serious, for before me lie the consequences of all my past and present work, to be decided by what I do now in these first days of the New Year. But my life has been bright too, as bright as the pictures on this sheet of paper, and I pass by almost every object they represent several times a day, on my way to the places where the claims of my cause summon me. As you love to live with me, you will forgive the brilliant decorations of my letter.

The 7th of January is over, and with it my lecture in the Natural History room, and you will be as glad to hear the results of it, as I am eager to tell you.

Just think. By the time I had written my lecture and Middendorff had copied parts of it (which copy amounted to five sheets), it was not possible for either of us to read it through, and I had to make Middendorff read some parts aloud to me, so as to remind me generally of the contents, while I dressed and at the same time ate something. We then hurried to the Zwinger (Frankenberg had been obliged to leave us), making some final arrangements as we walked along. Thus talking aloud with Middendorff I was recognised by a man in a long cloak, whom I had hurried past,

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and who said, or rather called out to me: "For God's sake, dear Director, what are you waiting for?" (It wanted only five minutes to the hour appointed.) "The Queen is coming punctually, you must receive her at the staircase, and I must present you to her." I answered: "I did not know that."

If we were hurrying before, we flew now; we had three minutes of time in the ante-room, and I instinctively and almost too abruptly introduced Middendorff as my best friend of twenty-five years' standing. He at once answered: "I will present Herr Middendorff, too, to Her Majesty." He asked after Frankenberg as well, but he had not yet come. This was hardly over, and my mind a little calmed, when the door was opened, and the Queen announced. Councillor Reichenbach at once took my hand, and half a minute later the Queen came up the stairs right royally. He presented me to her. She said some kind words. Middendorff was presented to her as my friend for twenty-five years, and my faithful fellow-worker. We moved on quickly, the Queen's cloak was taken from her shoulders, and we entered a crowded hall.

I afterwards heard that out of 200 seats only one or two were empty, and that 300 tickets had been distributed for standing room. Councillor Reichenbach said to me before: "You have a very select audience: I mean there are very cultivated people among your hearers." I was given an hour only, in order that those of the audience who were subscribers to the Theatre might be able to go there. The Queen's carriage, too, was ordered for six o'clock. Frankenberg had taken special note of all this.

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When six o'clock came, Frankenberg, who stood, as my assistant in the demonstration, on my left hand (Middendorff occupied the same post on my right), reminded me of the time. I looked at my watch; it marked half-past five, or I thought it did, and therefore took no notice of Frankenberg's repeated whispers of, "It is six, it is long past six, you must stop," but read bravely on, as if I were explaining my subject before friends; sometimes I got very warm, had to read a sentence twice over, etc. etc. In short, instead of six o'clock it was nearly seven when I stopped. I afterwards heard that only a few people had left the hall. The Queen herself had listened to me two hours instead of one, according to Middendorff, with great attention and appearance of interest, nay, of pleased satisfaction, and yet she granted me another half-hour for the explanation of some special points; and I think I may say from my own conviction, circumstances bearing witness for me, that she would graciously have allowed the subject to be further explained to her, if I, being rather exhausted by the whole thing, and especially by long speaking, had not put an end to the conversation, or rather to my exposition. She asked me several questions, and wished especially to know how I would impress the truths I had broadly stated on the characters, minds, and lives of children. I said that the simplicity and persistency of teaching would do much, and that, if Her Majesty would allow me, I would put the whole subject from this point of view to the proof before her for examination.

She answered me favourably. I cannot deny that in doing this, I had an idea which now appears to me untenable and unworthy, that this would be the only means of fully conveying the matter to her. In short, the Queen withdrew, repeating the remark that the happiest consequences must follow for the children and their future from this system of education, etc. Do not expect me to give you the exact words, I might do the Queen or myself injustice.

As regards the public, and the effect of my lecture, I was told several times that it was an immense point that the Queen should, after listening to me for two hours instead of one, have given me more than another half-hour of her attention.

The Councillor and I followed the Queen to the staircase, where she turned and again bowed to us. When I returned to the hall, I met Ruck, our Ruck, at the door, who cried: "I congratulate you!" So Herr Ruck can describe it all in Keilhau. The results will best speak for me and for our cause. Barop knows the place, both the hall and the gallery.

So ended that day: Middendorff thought my exposition clear. More details in another letter. All is now proceeding steadily, joyfully, freely, devoutly to its development.

Early this morning I went to thank the Court Chamberlain Minkwitz (not Miltiz) for his help, and to beg him to offer my respectful and hearty thanks to the Queen, for the gracious and great attention she had granted to my exposition, and especially to the fundamental idea of it, and at the same time to say that I awaited the commands of Her Majesty to lay

the subject before her, should she wish it, in her own palace. The Court Chamberlain answered very kindly that he would tell the Queen of my wishes and let me know the answer.

If I can, I will write more to-morrow. The most important fact is that the centre of educational life here, the Director of the Seminary, Herr Otto, is entirely in my favour. He is a liberal-minded, true German, and he said to me yesterday evening: "All is going well, and the 'cause must succeed." Many here who have influence wait for the opinion of this man.

May this letter give you pleasure, and bring you a happy and healthy New Year! Greetings to all. I cannot write more.

Ever yours,

F. F.

VIII.

DRESDEN, 28th January, 1887.

Good-morning, my dearest wife, and good-day to you, and through you to all who are in hearty intercourse with you, and take a warm interest in your life and in mine, and in the life of us all.

It is a long time, or it seems so to me, since I gave you any news of my life and doings here; but it must have seemed much longer if our dear and faithful and active Barop had not found means to give me good and satisfactory accounts of you. Thank God with all my heart! I cannot prove my gratitude

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better than by telling you the latest event of my life, which, though apparently small and insignificant, is yet the crown and blossom of my work here, and perhaps its only real fruit.

I am not going to take you to the audience chambers of great and influential people, to Ministers and their Councils, nor to lecture rooms, nor even to the private and friendly associations formed among families for the children's games, but to your husband's modest and somewhat queer-shaped room in the house of our dear friend Löwe, which, however, being turned to the morning sun and coloured a pale green and gold, is cheerful and pleasant enough. You will find him with a man of less than half his age, but of serious aspect, both sitting on a dark-blue sofa, in true human sympathy, as if they were old friends, although they have hardly been acquainted an hour; although one is a German and the other a Pole by nation, from Warsaw; although one speaks German as his mother tongue, and the other only as an acquired language, well enough to make his meaning clear, but with careful thought and continual examination of his choice of words. Before them is a dressing-table (like that in the lower house at Keilhau) on which are a quantity of your husband's well-known games and occupations. Opposite the latter sits Middendorff, who kindly hands him what he requires. On the right is Professor Löwe, who follows the conversation with a certain amount of criticism and commentary. On the left sits Frankenberg, who, I fancy, stores up for himself and for us the most important sparks of thought struck out by

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our vigorous conversation. My dear wife, you will hear this man say: "In seeing and finding you thus occupied (pointing to the means of education before us, and alluding to their intention and object), I feel as great a trust in you as if I had lived with you twenty years" (and as the young man is barely twenty-five, it was as if he had said "from my infancy"). What could this mean, coming from a plain man, quietly and simply said, but with strong feeling? You will hear this man say that he belonged to a society composed of members of the first families in Warsaw, which had been formed independently to satisfy a demand, a necessity, of their hearts and minds, by the establishment of schools adapted to little children of the lower and working classes in Warsaw. That he had been sent by this society (the Benevolent Society of Warsaw) of which he is a member, to Germany to visit the schools for little children, first in Berlin and Dresden, and then in Prague and Vienna, and to select what was best and most satisfactory in their methods for imitation in his native country. You will hear him say that he has not found what he sought and required, either in Dresden, a city which has the reputation of being so advanced in culture, nor, to his surprise, in Berlin; that he thinks himself very fortunate to have met me at Dresden, and that this will be a compensation for his journey and stay here. He says he cannot understand how, in a city so cultivated as Dresden, such means for the education of little children, even those of the lower and working classes, had not only failed

to gain active support, but had been met by dislike and opposition. People had tried to set him against the system by branding it with the stigma of mysticism, although it only deals with plain facts and intuitions, intuitions of the senses as well as of the intellect, *i.e.* mathematical intuitions. And then he began, like one of ourselves, to point out to us the fitness of the pieces and games before us, even and especially for the working classes, and for schools for little children, going so earnestly and keenly and from all sides into the matter, as if he had had to persuade us of their nature, use, necessity, and adaptability. You, my dear wife, would have enjoyed seeing this man, in his calm, earnest zeal. He thought it necessary to persuade us of the adaptability, from various points of view, of the games and occupations, as they presented themselves to his mind; and in the excitement of his mind, he did not reflect that I must have already discovered them. I let him, however, go on explaining this and the rest to us without interrupting him, and as if the subject were new to me. He said that this system, or, as he called it, "method" of occupation, deserved the epithet *excellent*. When he was seeking for a word such as this, he spent a long time in testing and choosing, till he found the term which seemed to him to express his meaning distinctly. You, my dear wife, could have told this man that, as this system of education which, as he said, is clear and palpable to the youngest child (for the child must touch everything, even his father and mother, when he would show his love and claim theirs), it also contains in itself all Philosophy. You then

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would hear this man say that he must now write a short pamphlet to give an account of his mission and its results, and that he will speak of this method, and draw special attention to it. He said it was not only his duty to transplant it to his own country, but also to foster it there, and that he would therefore translate as much of it as possible into Polish; but it would be necessary to alter many expressions, or, as he expressed it, modify them; but he added that, to be quite frank, he must confess that, at least for the present, the cause would gain by the omission of my name. I gave him practical proof how little I care about "name," from the fact that none of the papers on the games bear mine. He seemed struck by this. He then told me he wished to have all my works; that he would pay for them; that he wished to correspond with me, etc., etc. We then considered that he would require assistants, as it were arms and eyes, who should be trained under my direction in this method of teaching children. Naturally, the most important parts of all this were left for further and more detailed discussion. This man can only remain here a few days longer, but I have told him I will devote every morning, from eight to twelve, to him. On leaving me yesterday evening, he said it would be impossible for him to come this morning (he had been with me nearly four hours, from a quarter-past two onwards), as he was taking away several of my printed works to look through. This afternoon we shall perhaps meet in a family circle of little children, at the house of Herr Löwe (no relation, or even acquaintance, of Professor Löwe).

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You see, my dear wife, that meeting this man is for me the crown, flower and fruit of my work and stay here, and all the rest seems to me only like the unfertilised blossoms on cherry and plum-trees for instance, or the pink blossoms on apple-trees, or the leaves on the tops of fruit-trees, which unfold and then fall off. This man seems to me like the fructifying pistil, conveying to the flower the secret germ of life, hidden, invisible to us; the rest falls off, or shrivels and withers (like the calyx of the pear and apple), but the fruit grows. God protect it from maggots and wasps, and ripen it, for the health and healing and salvation of many!

Let me, dear wife, add two, or rather three observations: First, I find in this a *réalisation* of the human feeling our hearts and minds long silently cherished, which first took outward shape and effect during my absence in Switzerland, or perhaps before that. What springs from such manifestations of the innermost life of all seems to me far weightier and more important than any forms adopted from without, no matter how beautiful they may be, such, for example, as that used at Christmas: "The grateful son of Eigel." Barop should take note of this. Friends, what fruit may be looked for from this insignificant seed? Secondly, I see a remarkable resemblance between the appearance of this man, Theophil von Nowosielsky, and the earlier one, Xaver Schnyder von Wartensee. I see in it the rising of a star of the first magnitude for our lives.

Thirdly, and this will please you best, dearest wife, I feel myself inwardly calmed by this event. It has

Lehmann, Herr Löwe, Herr Peters, etc.), and since the idea and wish has taken root to secure this system of education, not only for the families in Dresden, a special establishment should be founded here for the purpose of training nursery attendants and teachers, or, if you like it better, educators of both sexes for children up to six years of age. "A good work takes time, especially with the people of Dresden," is what I am told on all sides. In order to give time for what I and we all think a good work, we have made the following plans: As I said above, if I had not some matters to attend to personally here, such as the attention due to Herr von Nowosielsky, I should have started for Leipzig to-day at latest, but I could not abandon what I had begun, namely, the care of the seed I had sown. I went, therefore, again yesterday afternoon with Middendorff to the amiable and unaffected family of Herr Löwe. Both parents were present, as well as others looking on. Yesterday, for example, a Frau Secretärin with her little daughter, and our Pole. The children were exceptionally nice and played delightfully. The subject soon led me and Herr von Nowosielsky into conversation, while Middendorff took care of the children. This is what usually happens when I am with Middendorff. I usually address myself to the more general topic with the parents, the children's games being always a ready introduction, or I speak with the mother about the younger children, and am glad to hear remarks from sensible mothers (to which class Frau Löwe most distinctly belongs) about the earliest life of their children, and the account of their first utterances. I make use

of all this for the groundwork and arrangement of the games and occupations. Yesterday evening Herr v. Nowosielsky accompanied us home, and although we were invited out at six o'clock, we did not leave the house till near seven. I gave him to read what I had published in the *Isis*, which I had still by me, in answer to the question, "Why, and in what sense, we call ourselves the Universal Educational Institution." I said that every one could and should look upon his own country, if it be a European one, and speaking one of the primitive and root languages, in the same universal light, and he could do so with Poland. I also showed him the passage in the *Isis*, containing the Consistorial Report of Zep. This morning he brought them back, with many thanks, saying he had made extracts of various notices and remarks.

We were all three invited to the house of the head-master, Baumfelder. How often I thought of you there ! How you would delight in this amiable, gentle family, with their numerous children, all so gay, and so simply, heartily trustful. The husband met us with expressions of pleasure that we had kept our word, saying (as it was late) that they had feared we had forgotten our engagement. The conversation soon became very lively on every side ; and the two other head-masters came in, one, the head of another seminary, Herr Steglich, now President of the Teachers Society, Herr Otto having retired according to rule, and a so-called head-master of a private school, now Secretary of the same Society. Herr Director Blochmann was also invited, but the visit of some relations from Silesia detained him. Conversation was very animated, and

turned upon the most important topics, both in general and in particular. Life and its object were specially discussed.

Two o'clock, Afternoon.—I think that after this, as it appears to me, crowning point of my work here, I have nothing more now of importance to tell you. My life in Dresden has attained its object; the seed is sown, and if it is not frozen, it may take root and fructify even under the snow. I might, therefore, and should have, left to-day, trusting to time and care for its development, if some supplementary work did not remain to be done.

The practical demonstration in the room of the Society “zu Rath und That,” took place, as you will see from the enclosed ticket, on Saturday. The gathering was fairly numerous, but there was room for more. The audience, besides the usual sympathisers, was of two kinds: on the one hand consisting of those who, I have reason to believe, from the expressions of the Minister of Public Worship, Herr v. Carlowitz, on whom I waited some days before my lecture, had been deputed to be present by the Minister of the Interior, and of the deputation from the Dresden Circle, for example, Herr Superintendent Heyman; on the other, of numerous mothers with their children.

The lecture was, with the exception of a few introductory words, entirely practical. First, lessons in the nursery game with the ball, between mother and child; then games for societies or families of children. After this, some games with the balls and cubes were shown, and carried out in their application

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to the more advanced games for children. Finally, the cubes divided in different ways were exhibited, and the cube made of eight little building blocks touched upon. It had now become so dark, that nothing more could be seen, and we were obliged to close. This was done with the singing of our little closing song,

So, finished is our play,
To us the time was gay,
Rightly to end it now,
Farewell to you we bow,

with bows to the company.

We had, before this, played in all only ten times with these children, but they did their parts very well. They especially sang very nicely, as in the opening song, "I bow, I bow, and wish you good-morning," so that one could see that those present were touched and really impressed. But one Pole, who was there, was not content with this; the impression made by the children on him, their innocent, calm, thoughtful faces, affected him so deeply that he broke out in enthusiastic expressions. He could not understand how cultivated mothers and women were not more moved. This surprise was also expressed later by the head-master of the school "zu Rath und That," who always took part with his wife and three children in the games and exercises. He said to me, that this showed how much mothers were estranged from the true maternal life, and the inner life of their children. Although no general and public expression of opinion regarding the lecture has come to my knowledge (some differences of opinion are said to have shown

themselves violently in the room itself), it was a very favourable symptom, that besides the actual performance, which took three hours, or two and a half—the children having, of course, frequent pauses for rest, during general explanations—people remained an hour longer, partly to hear some things repeated, and partly to see others. Among those who remained quite to the last (after the lecture was over, lights were brought), two especially showed a great and lively interest. These were Herr Heizmann, and the head-master of the Freemasons' school; the latter was interested in the subject on account of his own family. He knew of the great opposition which the introduction of our system had met with, but said it must be decidedly set on foot, and carried through. The present general excitement must be utilised, and the subject pressed while the interest in it was warm. I answered that this was the part of the parents, who should meet and express their wishes. I would gladly have visited both gentlemen, but have hitherto had no time.

Herr Baumfelder, a good-hearted, clever, amiable young man, friendly, but very keen in his investigations, had made notes of a number of hard questions to ask me, I may say hard nuts to crack. He was delighted, when, after my answer, he could say: "I have not done yet," and then, "now comes the chief thing." I fought my battle steadfastly, but, like an honourable warrior, always kept my back free, so that he said at last: "I see you are firm." That the subject touches what most deeply concerns men and Christians is self-evident; who could not easily make a

breach with such bombs and grenades? Middendorff was obliged to leave us early, about ten o'clock, and as he went, he (Baumfelder), in his lively humorous way, said, "I have not done yet," thus catching me in my own words, as I had shortly before, in his presence, said something to this effect: That all games and occupations for children were contained in my games, *i.e.*, could be derived from and through them. He had made a whole list of such games and occupations, and wanted to hear how I should derive them. "Well," I answered, seeing by accident that his wife was knitting on my left, and that she wore an embroidered cap, "well, knitting is certainly one of the occupations of children, at least of little girls. It is nothing but the regular twining of a flexible straight line in the same direction. So, sewing is nothing but bringing together two opposite things, and binding them together by a line twisted round itself. Embroidery is nothing but the representation in relief of the prettiest of invented figures and shapes, or, as in white stitching and embroidery, the representation, always in the same manner, of the purest ideas and thoughts of flowers and plants." They laughed. I said: "The shoemaker too, with curved or circular cutting of soles, and the weaver with his continued combination of opposing perpendicular and horizontal lines to form a flat surface, were not unrepresented in my games." We parted gaily, and the wife said at the door, "What a pity you are going away; I should have been so glad to hear more." We had also spoken of the development of our life, of the foundation at Keilhau.

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This morning, when I had only just begun my letter to you, Herr v. Nowosielsky came again, as I have said. He now wanted, instead of hearing new details as I had supposed, to learn from me over again the whole lesson of the ball, and its first beginnings, and more about the sphere and cube. He took pen and paper to make notes of the chief things. The conversation then spread over all the aspects of the subject, but always following a well-defined line. Bright flashes of life sprang forth, lighting, enlightening, warning. Among other things, he told me for the first time how all he saw at work in us, which was called out as the result of the games, had existed in his mind from his earliest childhood. As a proof of this, he adduced facts in his life, assuring me that they were now all made clear to him, and appeared in their true connection and value. I thought of Barop, and beg you, my dear wife, to tell him this, as I told Herr v. Nowosielsky what I had heard from Barop of his early presentiments.

I said to Herr v. Nowosielsky, among other things, that one of my chief aims was to make men realise their earliest and purest presentiments of life, and why these are so true. Continuing in this train of thought, I was led to say that his country had always been, and still was, very dear to me and to us, in connection with all that was truest and most disinterested.

He answered me, deeply moved, as his eyes and quivering lips showed, "I thank you, in the name of my nation." Yes, my Wilhelmina, there is something

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really great in being able to say this from the depth of truest feeling; but there is something infinitely greater and more elevating in the hope, that by service to a great, and, as I believe, most important cause to humanity, I may some time deserve such thanks in a wider sense. But enough of this. I imagine that our conversation, or rather my exposition, lasted from about nine o'clock till two. I was very tired and hungry; he did not seem to be either. To-morrow I am invited to the celebration of the anniversary of the foundation of the Teachers' Society. So much for the doings of this week. On Friday, I expect an important communication from Löwe, at the meeting of the Commercial Society. Sunday at latest we go to Leipzig. Send my letters there to Vogel. Barop knows the address. Frankenberg remains here. In two or three weeks I hope to be with you.

Yours, F. F.

IX.

DRESDEN, *February 3rd*, 1839.

Good-morning, my dearly-loved wife.

I posted a letter for you yesterday before six o'clock, so that I hope it is now at Leipzig, and will reach you, at latest, on Wednesday. I also hope that you received, four or six days ago, a letter through Barop, together with other news from him. Nevertheless, I hasten to write if only a few words of love and thanks for your dear, dear letter, which I read over and over again yesterday evening after the hurry of the day

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was over. This letter, written with all your depth of feeling and fulness of life, moved me deeply; I wished to fly to you at once, and wish it still, if it were only possible. I am now quite alone; my friends have been taken by other friends to the Artists' Club, where pictures are exhibited several times a week, as on Sunday, from eleven to one, to members and friends introduced by them who are lovers of Art. I have mentioned this Club before, having been introduced there by a member's son. Our friend Herr v. N.—for after his essay and his devotion to the object of my life (all of which you know of), I may well call him a friend in the higher and even highest sense of the word—Herr v. N. is among the number, as well as Professor Löwe. When Herr v. N. came into the room just now, he brought me a very kind present for you, and my letter acquires its real importance from this.

Ten o'clock in the Evening.—I thought I should have written you a long letter to-day; and now the day is gone, and what has become of it? It has almost been stolen from me. Just as I was telling you that Herr v. N. had brought *me*, as a present for *you*, in a drawing, he himself entered the room, with his companion, Herr Löwe. It was dinner-time, so we went to dine together. Herr Middendorff generally dines with Herr Valentin, and Frankenberg was invited to Herr Advokat Krause's. Before going, Herr v. N. and I were invited to take coffee at Professor Löwe's. We had hardly entered the room at the latter's house when two ladies were announced as

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wishing to speak to me. In the hurry of writing you so much important news of all kinds, I have forgotten to tell you that soon after my lecture in the school-room "zu Rath und That," an old lady who had been present at it came to me, saying she wished to hear more from me about the games and occupations. She introduced herself as a Swede, staying here only for a time, who had not indeed any children so young of her own, but had grandchildren, for whose sake she wished for more information on the subject. She at that time took the two first games, with the descriptions of them, with her to examine at home. It was this lady who now called, with her unmarried daughter, as I afterwards learnt, and her grandson of seven years old. In the course of the games with the child, it came out that she had travelled in Switzerland, and over the Simplon, and had stayed some time at Lausanne, and even at Yverdun with Pestalozzi. Is it not remarkable how this man reappears, either as a link, drawing people together, or, later on, drawing closer the bonds already uniting them? I frankly confess that on hearing this I felt a glow at my heart; it was as if I had met one I had known and associated with at the time of my own stay with Pestalozzi. I took her hand as that of a friend I was meeting again, although I do not even yet know who she is, nor if we were at Yverdun at the same time. She soon went away, leaving her daughter and grandson with us, saying that they were younger, and had better brains to learn the whole, and that she had another engagement; but before going she asked me if I did not intend to establish

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a school for the later education on this system. I answered that it was improbable, at all events at first, that I should be allowed to teach children on this method after the age of seven, but that I had an establishment near Rudolstadt, to which children whose future did not depend on Dresden could be sent, and where their education was carried on to the time of entering the university. She said that if the father of her grandson were informed exactly as to the principles and working of the establishment, he might decide, later, on sending his son even to the heart of Germany for his education. You see how the same ideas start up in different places. Barop must always strive to keep alive the purest, noblest, largest human spirit in the school; he should also enable me to give satisfactory answers to parents, by giving me the necessary information as to the conditions of entrance. I have already several times asked for this, through Middendorff and Frankenberg, for there is here a father, I believe an apothecary, who wants this information. The little Swede, who is really the son of a Swedish father, born in Sweden, pleased me extremely; he is an active-minded, strong, but very gentle child. He will probably from tomorrow attend our class for games. I wish he lived nearer, as I should greatly enjoy teaching the dear little fellow. The daughter told me later that her mother is a native of Courland, and, as well as her father, who has been dead, I believe, seven years, took a great interest in education, so that the latter had founded a free school, on Lancaster's system, on his estate in Sweden. This family may very likely visit

me again. I wished you had been there, you would have been pleased to see how the eyes of the daughter (who is, perhaps, twenty) brightened when she discovered, in what I explained to her about drawing, painting, and mathematics, the means of free self-culture. A few days ago I had another remarkable visit—a mother with her little girl of three. She was the sister-in-law of the Greek Minister, whose wife is her sister, and she came about her little girl. It appears, however, that the proposal of the class for games did not please her, as I have heard nothing more of her.

But where have I wandered to? This is just what happens in actual life, and I wanted only to tell you about my present. The day before yesterday, in the afternoon, Herr v. N. said that he should wish very much to have a living memorial of our many conversations, and that he begged I would allow him to draw my likeness. Averse as I have always been to this, I thought I could not refuse, and in less than an hour the sketch was finished. Löwe, Middendorff, and Frankenberg at once recognised the likeness, but the first thought it rather too thin. I, of course, am the last to be able to judge of it; but I found something in the eyes and expression, which, at least, was not alien to the chief thought of my life. Yesterday morning I received your dear letter, and spoke of it at once. He looked at your hand-writing, and said something about its boldness, etc. I was led, from the address, to read him the passage in which you speak of schools for little children. He said he should like to know you, and Middendorff, who, as

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you know, likes to give pleasure to his friends, and is at times rather rash and forward in his way of doing it, said bluntly: "If you wish to give Frau Fröbel pleasure you should draw a likeness of Herr Fröbel for her." I naturally protested, and he seemed to take no notice; but this morning, without my having the slightest suspicion, he brought me the picture, regretted that his time was so limited (he is going away in a few days), and begged me to greet you most respectfully from him, though unknown to you. I said that you were perhaps at that moment making his acquaintance and being introduced to him by my last letter to you. You will easily see that the drawing is a copy; the upper lip, for instance, is more like mine in the original. But that does not signify, if it gives you any pleasure as a reminder of me. It is intended neither for a finished drawing, nor, still less, for an exact likeness. Two circumstances pleased me in the matter, the decision with which he made the drawing; his pleasure in the work, and the rapidity with which he finished it. So now, my dear wife, your husband will, in the next few months, travel, if only in effigy, to Prague, Vienna, Cracow, and Warsaw, places which he never saw, and some of which at least he would very much like to see. In return, I have had my lecture in the Natural History room copied for Herr v. N. I hope soon to communicate it to you and our friends by word of mouth.

What has happened to-day? Towards evening Dr. Peters, who, though in deep sorrow for the loss of his dear little daughter, the bright little three-year-old Sophie, yet is always heartily devoted to our

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cause, sent Professor Löwe the petition of the parents who wish that my method of games should be established in Dresden *permanently* (that is the expression) for inspection. A foster-son of Herr Löwe has copied it. To-morrow afternoon it will be distributed; and perhaps on Tuesday, or at latest on Wednesday evening, I shall make my application to the Government for permission to establish associations and schools for the games. While the matter is maturing here, I shall come to you. It is noteworthy that while you were writing to me: "Would that a young man, thoroughly qualified, could be found here," Herr v. N. is devoting himself with his whole soul to the fostering and development of my life's thought, seeking, above all, to make it first entirely his own.* Professor Löwe said, I think the day before yesterday: "If your journey here had no other result than the discovery of this young man, that alone was worth coming for." Good-night.

X.

DRESDEN, February 2nd, 1839.

God bless you, my dearest wife.

How heartily glad I was to receive your dear kind letter to-day! When Nature is storming around us (for we, too, have had some fearful weather, and it is dreadful to think of the poor mountain folk, when the snow is so heavy, even in the town, as almost to prevent our getting about)—I say when Nature is in such an unusually stormy mood, one grows anxious

* In the German original the inverted commas continue to the words "his own," and the sentence is thus unintelligible.

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for those who are dear to one, especially when they are at a distance; and I must own, my dear wife, that I was almost painfully anxious about you and your dwelling during the last few days, and I longed more than usual for news of you. How happy I was, then, when your letter was brought me this morning by the faithful servant of our friend Houpe. You will, I hope, by this time, have received my letter to yourself, and have heard in detail from Barop of the state of things here. I mean from the letters that Middendorff wrote to Schnyder v. W., and to Dr. Kosel in Frankfort.

I now send you something to give in return to Barop. This is an article by our Herr v. Nowosielsky on my work, which was originally written for the *Leipzig Allgemeine Zeitung*. I hear now that that journal has, as the expression is, closed its columns to this subject, which is really unfair, as no decidedly favourable notice of the matter has yet appeared in it; however, the journal is closed to any communications concerning it, as a paper written on the subject by a certain Professor Franke of this place was returned to him with the remark that the editor of this journal had already refused a similar article, not wishing his paper to be made the battlefield of a polemical discussion. As I said, this is unfair, for this newspaper (the *Allgemeine Leipziger Zeitung*) has hitherto published no paper in favour of the cause. As it is now doubtful if, and when, and how Herr Director Vogel of Leipzig (to whom Herr v. N. was referred) will get the paper published, I send it to you in manuscript, that you may see what others, and

especially Herr v. N., think of our cause. I send the article to Barop also, through you, in order that he may distribute copies of it among our friends. The quickest plan would be to have it copied by some one of our circle, perhaps by Herr Unger, with lithographic ink, and then have copies printed from that. He should see to this carefully.

Whether Herr Franke's article will be published, and where, I do not know. You will find new proof of the activity of our zealous Herr Löwe in the enclosed writing of Middendorff. But time flies, and I must make haste to give you at least an outline of the present state of affairs.

About twelve or more families (all known to you through my former letters), have now decided to carry on the meetings for games which we have begun. At least twenty-four children are collected. These families will sign a request to me to take the necessary steps to bring the subject before the Government. On the ground of this request I shall apply to the Superintendent of the School district for a permission, technically called a "concession." All this will be done by Monday or Tuesday. Yesterday evening I went on this account to the chief man in the District School Board, Superintendent Heimann (of whom I have already spoken to you). I gained him over to my cause, by my last demonstration in the school-room "zu Rath und That," and by an idea I suggested, like that for which Fellenberg once tried to put me in the pillory, or at least to make me ridiculous. This idea and some cursory remark on the word ball, entirely won over the man's mind and heart and active

energy. We spoke much on our subject (I had heard before that he was a very able philologist, and had been Professor at one of the Saxon Royal Schools, Grimma or Meissen), and Heimann, who is preferred by many to the chief Court Preacher, and is very highly esteemed here, said that it was astonishing how deeply and thoroughly I had thought out the matter, and worked it out logically in all directions. Really, my dear, dear wife, when I hear these men speak, as I have heard two of them—I say two only, but they were careful, sober fathers of families—all personal and other attacks vanish like mist and clouds before the warming rays of the sun.

By Wednesday at latest I hope all necessary steps will have been taken; then there will be an interval of two, three, or four weeks before the decision can be known; during this time I shall go to Leipzig, then return here perhaps, for a few days, to see how matters stand, and then hasten to you at Blankenburg. Frankenberg will now certainly stay here, Middendorff will, I think, go home before I do.

To-morrow I shall have time, and will then answer your letter in detail. I have not yet had leisure to read it over quietly. A new association for games has been formed by three or four families. Apparently I have set everything in order. The ground burns under my feet; I hoped to have been with you long ago.

Love to all,

Yours, F. F.

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XI.

DRESDEN, *February 4th*, 1839.

Good-evening and good-night, my dearest wife.

It is past ten o'clock, and please God you are sweetly sleeping. May He bless and give you strength, my own!

The day's hurry is at length over; but real progress has been made to-day. The circular was sent round for the signatures, and four of the most influential fathers of families have signed it. You will find all enclosed, and I will add the other signatures as they come in, till my letter is finished.

To-day, I was a great deal with Herr v. N. I looked out for him a selection of games and occupations to give as examples in his paper. He was very pleased at this, and our conversation took a very important turn. I should like you to hear him speak; his words flow like clear water, without excitement or violence, but clear, warm, and living from his mouth. To-day, for instance, he said: "There is nothing left to accident in your life, all is necessary and orderly." Herr v. N. expressed also the strange idea that my system of teaching and games is really witty; for the foundation of it is the same as that of wit, viz., extreme rapidity of perception. This reminded me of Schnyder's sonnet. He also said quite calmly, but his face lighted up joyfully, and his eyes danced: "You might live two hundred years without being able to express all that is in your mind."

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It is strange that he should have gone through now the same experience which I had (in 1805) at Frankfort. He was in an official position at Warsaw, and was summoned by one of his earliest friends—famous in his own country as a writer of fables, especially for children—to take up this educational work, of which he had never thought before; and now he is as much at home in it, as if he had been born to it. Several others were proposed for this mission to Germany, but his friend said to him: "No one is so fit for it as you." He hopes in three years, when the work is well grounded in Warsaw, to come again to Germany, and then also to visit Keilhau. He was very glad to have been able to stay so long in Dresden, and see the matter worked to a definite issue, so as to be able to give facts and results in support of what he intends to say and do. He copied the application of the parents to me, with their signatures, and this may indeed carry weight, and be of use, as the signatures are headed by that of a man who sits in the ministry itself, as one of the council. Beg Barop to have two copies made of these names and sent as soon as possible to Langenthal and Kosel, or to Schäffer at Frankfort-on-Main. Think how Langenthal's work during his last visit to Germany has borne fruit, and he himself should be told this on every occasion. Ackermann, who has a brother here, has spoken of Langenthal's work in Frankfort; the brother, who is here, has told some of his friends, including, I think, Herr Vogel, who was well disposed to the cause before, and now has no more earnest wish than to see a class for games established

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near his house, which his son could join. Thus word and deed do their work, but they must be actively and incessantly kept up. You see how the cause has silently gained ground, as seed sown which quickens and shoots up beneath the winter snow.

But now to the main point, which is the real object of my letter, besides sending you a hearty greeting. You said something to me about the three Clemenses, which has made me think a great deal about them all, but especially the two younger brothers, and most of all about our faithful old Wilhelm, for it is thus that I always think of him. I have not had time to write to you, much less to Herr Langethal, on the subject, as I should have been glad to do. I am firmly persuaded that a new school for girls will be established here in the spring, with a considerable extension, though only for children under ordinary school age; that is, who, as the circular expresses it, have not completed their sixth year. But who can tell what direction the development will take, or how the spirit will find ways and means for itself. We will hold fast to that which is first. Thus, the care of plants by the children themselves, or by those about them, is inseparably connected with the system, as well as the training of teachers for little children. You know what a close relation I hold to exist between the observation of nature and the cultivation and care of plants and human education, and what great plans I have long had in my mind on the subject. You will, perhaps, remember how many carefully suggestive hints I have given our Wilhelm C. in this connection. You will also remember his writing to me from

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Eisenach, and speaking to me later at Kailhan of his longing to devote himself in the future to my life's work. His actual words I have forgotten at this moment. Now, in this new field which is opened to me here, there is really a prospect of fulfilling this wish, which, though only whispered, was full of heartfelt warmth, especially as Wilhelm is already greatly interested in teaching. You see, my dear wife, that work such as mine here, even though as yet only a hidden germ, requires a multifarious and yet united strength: the strength of three really united brothers, under the faithful care of a loving and experienced father, would serve this purpose at first, and perhaps even longer. Now you have always, with true motherly feeling, wished that I should not only feel, but act as a father towards these three brothers. How would it be if we brought first one, then a second, and, if the trial were successful, a third brother to the work here, so that they might learn its requirements, and all three gradually train themselves for it, carrying it out together under my care, as long as I live, and, after my death, in true brotherly union? To me, at this moment, it seems as if this would be the best realisation of all we have thought and said about them, as well as the best seal of all we have done for these three brothers, and—though this is accidental, that is, independent of our own intention—the best gift added by Providence to our life, the best memorial of what we have lived for, our work and aim and objects; and as they all, but especially Wilhelm, and also Christfriedrich, have chosen the work of teaching for themselves, they will probably continue all the more

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entirely and disinterestedly true to it. Besides, Dresden offers all the means for their further education, and especially as regards Wilhelm and Carl, for the cultivation of their talent for art. I wished to write to Langethal before Christmas, when he informed me of Wilhelm's wish to become a teacher, telling him of my idea, and leaving the rest to him; but I had not time, although I should have liked Langethal to know my intention before Wilhelm began his actual work as a teacher. I am now afraid Wilhelm will not remain long in his situation, which is not a very favourable one for a young man who is bent on developing and cultivating his own powers; and I therefore wish that Langethal should be instructed, by a few words from you or Barop, to watch over the life of Wilhelm especially, but also that of Carl, with a view to the above object, for—

Langethal will not leave Burgdorf and the Canton of Berne.

Ferdinand will establish himself at Willisau, in the Canton of Lucerne all the more firmly, as Langethal extends his work at Burgdorf and we ours in Germany.

Barop cannot leave Keilhau.

Frankenberg does not seem to me to be strong and thorough enough for such work as I look forward to here; and I believe that his whole inclination calls him to America, where necessity may teach him what he does not now grasp freely and with conviction.

Middendorff appears to me to be called to higher and less stationary work, and I hear his wife has settled herself in Keilhau; besides this, it is not to be

thought of, that the Clemenses should work alone for a long time to come. It is only a question of making them really capable of good work.

[The conclusion is missing.]

XII.

DRESDEN, February 7th, 1839.

I can only send you a few words of greeting, my dear wife, and must make haste that post time may not again pass without my sending you the long-wished-for news of my doings. I am so glad to be able to send you now all the actual signatures of the worthy men who have joined in the request for a permanent institution for their children. You will find among them the names of all the faithful ones of whom I have spoken to you from the beginning.

To-morrow morning early our Herr v. N. takes his departure; we are all of us busy now preparing for him a sketch of my life and ours. To-morrow I hope to present my application for the license to teach children up to seven years of age, or, rather, up to the end of their sixth year.

The day after to-morrow I propose, God willing, to go to Leipzig. It is with some anxiety that I leave all in Frankenberg's hands, but nothing else is feasible and he cannot do real harm, though I could wish he did not treat everything so lightly and were more faithful, or at least more careful, in small things.

Well, God will protect us. Thank God for giving me and us all good health. May my coming bring you the same. Letters expected at Leipzig. Love to Louise and all.

Yours, F. F.

XIII.

LEIPZIG, *February 16th, 1839.*

Good-morning, and God bless you, my dear wife.

I at last arrived here safely the day before yesterday at five o'clock by railroad from Dresden, and am much nearer to you, if not in distance, yet in time; so near, indeed, that I begin to think of my return to you, and as matters stand here it may well be that I shall be with you by the middle or end of next week. How my heart longs for, and looks forward to that time! I made quite sure that I should find a letter here from you, as it is so long since I heard from you or Barop, but my hopes of finding one at Herr Vogel's from Blankenburg or Keilhau were disappointed. I can almost rejoice at this, for it proves, at least indirectly, that your precious health has not been worse. May it become better and strengthened.

Instead of letters from you, I found one here from our faithful, and, I may say, indefatigably active Leonhardi from Frankfort written on the 8th of the month. I enclose a copy of it, made by our industrious Middendorff, and hope it will give you all pleasure.

Before telling you how, that is, at what stage of

progress, I left matters in Dresden, I will first describe what I have done up to this time in Leipzig. I was dragged away from Dresden in such haste that I really had not a minute or second of time to spare, if I was to get away at all, being occupied up to the last moment for our cause; so that I was in great need of rest when I reached Leipzig, for the railway does not rest one for many reasons. It was therefore eleven o'clock yesterday before Middendorff and I went to call on Herr Director Dr. Vogel. I found him a kind and even sympathetic man. He received me as a fellow-countryman from Stadtilm. We soon discovered that he had known my eldest brother Cristoph in Griesheim very well, and had often been in his house; and he told me that he attributed his own later love and taste for natural history and natural sciences to my brother's lectures and explanations on Frick's "Natural History." This was already one bond of mind, heart, and life between us; but we were to find yet another. Dr. Vogel is the godson of my dear uncle Cristoph in Stadtilm, and was given his name, like my brother at Griesheim. I remembered, on my side, how kindly and encouragingly I used to be received by the parents of Dr. Vogel. Our conversation was therefore full of lively human interest. I felt as if I had gone back to my youthful days, and could not resist pressing Dr. Vogel to my heart, and giving him a kiss. Whether this mutual return to our earliest youth will have any results for the progress of our cause I do not know, though I shall try to make use of the threefold association of brother, uncle, and parents; for the question is, first, how far Dr.

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Vogel cares for and values such facts and phenomena of life, and then whether he will take a deep or shallow, an earnest or superficial view of my undertaking—as to which, after seeing and speaking with him, I can give no opinion, for there are people who combine easy and careless manners with depth and earnestness of life. But I cannot and dare not as yet answer for this in Dr. Vogel. So much is, however, certain, that he is very active in the cause, when he receives his materials ready prepared for him. He has, for instance, already sent Langethal's treatise to Berlin, to the Director of the Seminary, Dr. Disternez, that he may have it printed in an educational newspaper, the *Rheinische Blätter*. He has also taken measures to have Nowosielsky's essay printed in the Appendix to the *Leipzig Allgemeine Zeitung* of the 10th February, 1839. Although you and Barop and the rest already know this essay, and though we hope soon to be with you, Middendorff and I have thought it well to send a copy to you, and especially to Barop, that he may, as circumstances admit, make use of it for the furthering of our cause in Rudolstadt. We have also sent one to Leonhardi—with reference to his letter to me, of which I send you a copy—that he may make use of it to oppose those earlier articles which came from Dresden and Leipzig, and for the furtherance of the cause in Darmstadt and Karlsruhe. If you, my dear wife, and Barop now compare the results of Leonhardi's exertions in Frankfort, Darmstadt, Karlsruhe, with those we have obtained at Dresden, you will see that the question now arises—where the educational establishment, in the first place for German

children, and then for more advanced culture for young men and women, should be founded? Shall it be, as the choice now seems to offer itself, at Blankenburg or in Dresden? Middendorff and I think it would be advisable that this question should be brought forward in certain places before I return to Rudolstadt. Of course our own hearts and inclinations are all in favour of Blankenburg; but how often our hearts must be silenced when Destiny makes higher claims on us! This is why we put the subject before you so early, as Destiny has set it before us. Ah! indeed, if Rudolstadt were Sondershausen, there would be no doubt about the matter; nay, if Blankenburg could offer appropriate buildings, that would also decide it. We even thought of Schwarzburg, if it were not in the midst of a wilderness. I now commit all this to your and Barop's thoughtful consideration. Barop should also privately consult our colleagues and friends, Stauch in Volkstadt, and Stark in Weida, in his examination of the subject. I have in my mind the demand and opinions expressed by Leonhardi in his letter to me.

Now, as to Leipzig. Yesterday evening Herr Vogel took us to the Polytechnic Club, where very interesting addresses and communications were given between seven and nine o'clock. After nine he took us home with him to supper. We spent the evening very pleasantly till twelve in the society of the book-sellers, Barth and Ross. The conversation turned on Pestalozzi's work and life and mine. It was agreed that we should all meet to-day at Vogel's, from ten to twelve in the morning, and then that I should to-

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morrow morning, after church, from ten to twelve, I think, give an exposition of the whole system to a select audience, consisting of Herr Vogel's assistant masters and some of his friends, in one of the town school-rooms. Ladies are also to be present. Neither Middendorff nor I, however, expect to make much impression in the families of Leipzig. All seem here to be too superficial, too conventional, and too well satisfied with themselves. It is remarkable how different I feel the ground to be here and at Dresden; how different are my surroundings here. I should say that *there* one found stiffness and hardness in men's lives; nay, even a rough uncultivated nature; and yet a thoughtful human life in some families, which, however, stand isolated from, and are strangers to each other. *Here* I find myself in a cultivated garden of life (in which respect it resembles the environs of the town), where men meet easily and gaily, but also carelessly. Herr Vogel said that I had exposed myself and my cause to the hardest test and task by beginning with Dresden, for that schools and private teaching were at a very low grade of culture there. He made use of still harsher and more characteristic expressions, which I cannot allow myself to repeat. Well, I am glad to have had the hardest task first, when I came fresh from Blankenburg, with my whole stock of strength and energy. Now, I do not think, whatever they may say, that I could move, rouse, and kindle that mass.

Yesterday afternoon I paid a visit to Frau Pastorin Richter and her sister. I soon found their house, but the former was in bed, so ill that I could neither see

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nor speak with her. Twice since her return from Blankenburg she has been so near death, that it was only by the instantaneous use of the most powerful remedies that she was recalled to life. However, she is better now, and hopes to be able to see me on Sunday. Both her unmarried sisters too, whom we know, have been ill during the last quarter of the past year, as well as Herr Dr. Floy, in Göttingen. These two sisters were delighted to see me, and send you much love.

Now to go back to my account of what happened in Dresden. I send you the request of the parents to me with their signatures. On the 12th February, I sent in my application to the Director of the School District of Dresden. I would gladly have sent a copy at once to you and Barop, but time is too short. Frankenberg remained to carry on three family circles (at the Lehmanns', Löwe's, and Doctor Peters'). The decision of the Director will also settle the question of Frankenberg's longer or permanent stay in Dresden. But I doubt the parents resting satisfied with a refusal, at any rate not Peters and Professor Löwe ; at least I hear that signatures are now being collected, so that if the value and importance of the first signatures fail of success, the *mass* of subscribers may have more effect. Beyond this, Peters, Löwe, Manitius, and Otto are taking the greatest interest in the cause. We must not, however, wait for the results of my application, but treat the matter as if all depended upon us and Blankenburg. To concentrate on the least really living spark the highest life and effort, must be our



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aim and endeavour. While we take care of Blankenburg and Keilhau in Germany, Barop should, when he has time, send, as soon as possible, a copy of everything to Langethal at Burgdorf, that he may act as regards Burgdorf and Switzerland, as if the whole future progress of my present work depended upon Burgdorf and Switzerland alone, and upon a concentration of our strength there. Barop must look after the work on all sides most carefully. Though we know nothing as yet as to place, as to time it is "Now or never." But you are right, dear wife, to say to me, "Slow and sure," or "More haste, less speed." I am glad of this, and long to join my life again to yours, dear wife, Barop's and my brother's, that our cares and thoughts may once more be brought into one focus.

Professor Löwe treats me, I may say, as an old friend. He has said several times: "Why did I not make your acquaintance ten years ago?" Although he is very much occupied with his official business, he has kept the literary work, the Sunday paper, in his own hands. I consider the discovery of Löwe as having enriched and rounded off our whole life even if we had gained nothing further. The meeting with Nowosielsky and Löwe, our own improvement in carrying out our work, and the internal purification and closer unity of our circle itself, especially as regards Frankenberg, are all great gains for the whole. Besides, the great discussion and even abuse of the cause in Dresden did no real local damage. God bless you, dear wife, I cannot write more. Write

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for me to leave this for eight days. I write to tell you this. I must work while I am called to it. As to my life here, and the fruit of my work, I, as yet, know nothing. I enclose you my application to the School Board of Dresden, that you may at least receive something definite. If you cannot write, dear wife, ask Barop at any rate to write to me by return of post.

More soon from,

Your FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL.*

By B. VON MARENHOLTZ BÜLOW.

OF all the services that Frau von Marenholtz Bülow has rendered to Fröbel's cause, not the least certainly is the publication of her personal recollections. They, or large portions of them at least, appeared first in the "Erziehung der Gegenwart,"† the journal of the Universal Education Union (Allgemeine Erziehungs-Verein), which, founded by the untiring zeal of Madame von Marenholtz, has for some years laboured so strenuously and so ably for the propagation of Fröbel's system; and to whose Fröbel Institution for the training of poor students the proceeds of the book are generously dedicated. It is a book that should be in the hands of every person who really cares for the system, or for its author. Some of the conversations and dissertations are not fitted, as the writer remarks, for beginners, but for those who, having in some measure mastered the principles, are able to seize the philosophical aspect of the question,

* "Erinnerungen an Friedrich Fröbel."—Cassel. 1876.

† They were largely translated into English for the Rev. G. Wigand.

and to apprehend both its application to present social needs and its immense reach in the future. But if young students are unable to do this, all can feel the charm of the picture presented to us of the kind, genial old man, with his loving heart and unflagging zeal. Unprepossessing in appearance, but making even hostile observers forget all outward circumstances when the inner man was revealed—equally ready to play with children—to instruct the inquirer—to discuss with the learned—defending his system with the simplicity of genius, as proudly confident in the power of his theories as he was humble in his personal pretensions.

Frau von Marenholtz, who had been such an unwearied apostle of Fröbel, knew him personally for a short time only. Four years, or rather portions of four years, prepared her for twenty-five years of devoted labours. Fröbel on returning to his native province of Thuringen, to devote himself to the Kindergarten and training of teachers, had chosen a spot in close proximity to the baths of Liebenstein, and it was in the course of a visit to those baths, in the spring of 1847, that Frau von Marenholtz became acquainted with him and with his work. He had but lately settled there in a peasant's house that he had built, and the account given of him by the woman with whom Frau von Marenholtz lodged was that he was called "the old fool," because he played and danced with the village children. In the course of a walk a few days later, she met him, "a tall thin man with long gray hair, leading a troop of village children of from three to eight years old, mostly bare-footed,

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and but scantily clothed, marching in time, two and two, up to a neighbouring hill, where he set them to a game with an appropriate song." "The loving unselfishness and patience with which he conducted this," continues Frau von Marenholtz, "and the whole bearing of the man while he made the children play several games under his guidance, had something in them so touching that tears stood in my eyes and in those of my companion; and I said to the latter, 'This man may be called an old fool by those around him, but perchance he is one of those whom their contemporaries despise, or cast stones at, and to whom future generations erect monuments.'"

Such keen insight at the first moment leaves no room for surprise that the acquaintance which began that day soon ripened into intimacy, and that the same discernment turned to the study of the system, made this new disciple very soon fit to become a teacher. Fröbel was enchanted to find one who so rapidly and fully understood and sympathised with him, who was so used to be misunderstood and neglected; and thus day by day conversations became more and more intimate, entering into all parts of his views both practical and philosophical, till they gradually absorbed a large portion of such time as he could spare from his active work, which was divided between the children and the young women he was training either for Kindergarten mistresses or for the charge of children at home.

Portions of these conversations and of the reflections they gave rise to at the time, which were duly recorded, and often talked over again with the master,

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form the bulk of the present volume; and they are a treasure-house of educational wisdom, touching upon all the points of greatest interest and of most originality in his system—the importance of infant training, the mission of women, religious education, the formation of character, study of Nature, and the *Welt-Anschauung* (idea of the universe), which formed the groundwork of all his views of education. For he did not, as ordinary educators do, look first at society and then consider how a child could be so instructed as to take a fitting place therein; but looking at universal Nature as the visible manifestation of Divine thought at Nature's laws as the revealed will of the Creator

he viewed man as one object in Nature subject to those laws, certain to be moulded by them, but bound to obey them willingly, as the free service of a reasonable moral being. To train the child for this, which will include all else, is the educator's work. Evidently mere instruction that aims at fitting a man for the work of the world is a secondary affair in such a comprehensive view of education, and can fitly come in only when the mental, moral, and physical development has reached the point when the child can exercise his own faculties freely and with some accuracy, and feels at home in the outer world, and hence the reproach of indifference to knowledge that has been so freely levelled at Fröbel.

Frau von Marenholtz had the great privilege of being able to introduce Fröbel to persons whom, in his retired, almost obscure position, he would have had no means of knowing, and thus of opening an avenue by which he might become known to a larger,

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and especially a more influential circle. He had lectured in great cities, in Dresden especially, but he had little gift of speech; and though he won individual converts, he made no wide impression, and few of those whom Madame von Marenholtz sought to interest in his cause seem to have had any idea of the importance of the reform he was inaugurating. His new friend was a welcome and honoured guest of the ducal families of Meiningen and of Weimar, and the Duchess Ida of Weimar, who resided during the summer at Liebenstein, was soon won over to take earnest interest in Fröbel's work, and to visit him frequently. She also invited him to her table, and on one of these occasions the Grand Duke, then heir apparent only, who came in with some other exalted personages to pay a visit, was so fascinated by him that he said, "He speaks like a prophet."

An amusing anecdote is given which illustrates the difficulties under which Fröbel was then carrying on his work. He was dining with the Duchess, when a painful smell of stables invaded her Highness's room, and, after all possible remedies had been sought, Madame von Marenholtz suggested that doubtless the offence was caused by Fröbel's coat, which, in the wretched peasant's house he inhabited, was hung up in close proximity to the stable; and she took occasion to infer how necessary it was that the master should be better lodged, and how desirable a certain unused ducal villa at Marienthal would be for his training institution. The good-natured Duchess seized the suggestion, and after a time the Kindergarten and training classes were removed to this charming locality.

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Dr. Franz von Marenholtz not only introduced her to persons in high station, she also brought to see and hear him men of ability and influence in the public service or in literature—members of school councils, directors of gymnasiums, writers on education, *Lehrpersonen*, to use the word which the Germans have preserved and use in a modern sense, though it is so crystallised in its old meaning with us, that it is hardly intelligible as applied to the men of to-day. Of them, Diesterweg was one of the first who came, and one of the best known: he arrived prejudiced against Föbel, and begged Madame von Marenholtz to spare him any talk about the man who mixed up play and teaching. But he allowed himself to be taken to see him, and was converted.

The first time he went, Föbel had already begun his morning class: thus Diesterweg heard him while his own presence was unknown. He came to school, but stayed in the porch. His remark afterwards was, "The man has something!" He frowned about him.

Since this expression is recorded to have been used, the fervour of conviction and its desire to carry other minds with him seems to have combined with the certainty of his views, to transform his ordinary speaking and somewhat drowsy speaking into what seemed like inspiration, and subdued to reverence men who had neither interest nor sympathy for him before. The acquaintance thus begun was a happy one, and Diesterweg became his earliest supporter. In the following summer a daughter of his was among Föbel's pupils.

Dr. Eilke was the next candidate of the same kind.

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He was an admirer of Pestalozzi, and did not believe that Fröbel had done more than imitate his predecessors ; but he soon changed his opinion, and was not only convinced, but charmed, as indeed were all, with the old man's earnest enthusiasm, his self-devotion to the cause of humanity, joined to the child-like simplicity and affectionate geniality of his intercourse, especially with children and with the children he was training. Dr. Rühne, who was editor of the *Europa*, shortly after advocated the system in that journal.

The comparison between Fröbel's and Pestalozzi's methods is one of the points of great interest recorded in a conversation which took place at that time, but space will not allow of reproducing it. This comparison belongs to a yet larger subject, to Fröbel's claim to have founded a new education, which is of the utmost interest, but the discussion of which cannot be entered into here.

It soon became a custom among many of the frequenters of the baths to walk out to Marienthal to visit the institution. If Fröbel was engaged in teaching, he took no notice of visitors ; afterwards he would enter into real discussion with such as cared to do so, and many doubtless went from real wish to learn, others from mere *désœuvrement*, with that ludicrous contempt for what they do not understand which characterises the frivolous. Others, again, took pleasure in the mere superficial aspect of his method, and were indifferent to the truth that lay beneath. But on the whole the effect produced by the evident enjoyment of the children, by their intelligence and docility, and by their intense fondness for Fröbel, converted

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many to the Kindergarten who could not have understood the views of which it was the exponent.

Madame von Marenholtz speaks of the "truly fatherly love with which Fröbel regarded his teacher-pupils, who in like manner bore the strongest affection and veneration for him. These affectionate relations within the institution made the most pleasing impressions on all who came within the Marienthal circle, and awoke the sympathy even of outsiders. This feeling," she continues, "was much kept up by the long walks together which we often took in the lovely neighbourhood of Liebenstein. When I once remarked to Fröbel, how happy this feeling of common interest and companionship made me feel, he replied, 'Yes, but that is only possible where one idea rules and binds us together. An idea alone can produce truly spiritual harmony.' How true this has been in politics, in religion, in philanthropy! Stronger, thank God, than all ties of interest, has ever been the tie forged by acknowledging One Ideal worthy to live and die for."

This community of feeling and interest Fröbel loved to express in outer form by days set apart for enjoyment, family festivals, birthdays, long expeditions that would end with a sunset hymn, as the fading of a glorious summer day was watched from some neighbouring hill. The same feeling prompted the *Spielfest*, held during the summer of 1850 in the park of the old castle of Altenstein, the account of which is one of the most interesting episodes of Madame von M. Bülow's narrative. It had been planned in concert with Middendorff, whose presence was felt to be abso-

lutely necessary on such an occasion. More than 300 children from four neighbouring villages were assembled; there were flowers, garlands, songs, all appropriate and symbolical expressions of harmony and joy, such as Fröbel loved. The many young women, trained by him as teachers, accompanied the children, and Kindergarten games and dances, in all of which Fröbel and Middendorff joined unweariedly, were carried on through several happy hours, to the delight of the children and also of a large assembly of spectators. Among the latter was the Duchess Ida, who sent refreshments for the children.

The Spielfest was not, like an ordinary school feast, an interruption of educational work or a mere reward in the shape of pleasure; it was part of the education itself, part of that which was to raise and civilise the young creatures while following the laws of Nature. "It is a great educational mistake," Fröbel maintained, "to deprive childhood and youth of innocent enjoyment. For Nature has put in the heart the desire for and the striving after it. As it would do injury to physical development if real natural wants were denied, so is the soul made to suffer, and is stunted in its development, when the craving for recreation and enjoyment is repressed."

It was not only for children, but for all, that Fröbel held enjoyment to be a valuable part of life, and considered the united expression of enjoyment as a part of religion. As the Olympian games were to the Greeks, so, he thought, national feasts celebrating great deeds, heroic memories, national events, should find place among us; and children's play-feasts, which

seem a natural expression of the feeling kindled by the training in common in the Kindergarten, would prepare the way. Thus, as with everything in his mind, small things were the symbols of great things; childish steps lead to the path which shall be trodden by the man, and all parts of life are connected in links binding the whole forward progress of the race together.

One of the strangest accusations that the enemies of Fröbel have brought against him was that of irreligion, whereas religion was to him so completely the all in all of life that none can understand his system who do not bear in mind his conviction of the all-pervading presence of the Most High, in which literally all created things "live and move and have their being." To vivify Christianity by training new generations to understand it better was the earnest hope of his life.

Madame von Marenholtz's "recollections" abound with evidence of this ever-present sense of religion in Fröbel's life and opinions. It was in his old age that she knew him, when the struggles, the too ardent hopes and too bitter disappointments of long laborious years were over, and he was calmly, though ceaselessly, working out his latest and most cherished schemes. His utterances then were from the fulness of long experience and thought; and most remarkable among them is the habitual religious fervour, the earnest struggling after union with God in every effort he made, in every hope he entertained for the human race.

Fröbel's religious views were not separate from his

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educational views, they were parts of one whole: there was indeed, so to speak, no one section of his opinions that could be taken out for separate discussion or criticism, to be accepted or rejected alone. His method of viewing and studying Nature was part of his religion. His religion was bound up with the observation of Nature in which he read the laws of God. And his views of education are founded both on religion and reverence for Nature which meet in the contemplation of the human being, whose wonderful gifts and capabilities have to be trained to serve and love God amid the wonders of His creation; who is destined from generation to generation to obtain more complete empire over the outer world in which he is placed, and to work in a higher moral sphere as he more and more recognises the laws of his own moral being.

Thus, while Fröbel deprecates all teaching of creeds and formulas to little children, he would have their life impregnated, so to speak, with religion. Admiration awakened by observation of Nature; desire for knowledge first stirring among unknown wonders and mysteries, the sense of dependence, the certainty of love and protection; all these things were ceaselessly to minister to the awakening and fostering of the religious feeling in the child. The time for words and abstractions comes after.

"We must open the eyes of our children," he says, "that they may learn to know the Creator through His creation. Only then, when they have found God the Creator through the help of visible things, or seen Him foreshadowed in them, will they be able to appre-

hend the meaning of the term God in spirit and in truth, and learn to be Christians. First comes the visible world, and then the invisible truth, the idea. These opposites, visible and invisible, must for the young child be united by concrete images, not by words, which at most give him only a vague impression. My 'Mother's Songs' show how this work may be begun . . ."

Without religious preparation in childhood no true religion, no transformation after the likeness of God is possible for man. Belief in God is indeed born in every human creature, it has only to be awakened rightly; but it must be awakened, or it remains without life.*

"It is a great fault in the religious instruction of the present day," he says again, "that the opposition between nature and the spirit has been most dwelt upon, instead of leading the childish mind rather to see the harmony between them, and that the cessation of discord is God's purpose." This would be more consonant with nature. "For," he continues, "the eye of the child first perceives similarity, connections, and binding links, and afterwards only difference and contrasts."

"In these days," he says in another place, "men while dwelling upon the spirit have forgotten nature and objects in abstractions. Words are separated from things, and as mere words are mostly misunderstood."

Madame von Marenholtz quotes with approbation Middendorff's opinion that the long perverted and

* "Erinnerungen," see pp. 20, 21.

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misunderstood spirit of Christianity will kindle with new and higher light among men whenever Fröbel's system of education shall have found its full application. But how, she asks, with some discouragement, is this to come to pass? And Middendorff replies, "It can only be if we patiently nourish small beginnings, and cast abroad the seed which perhaps long after we are gone will spring up." Truly it is no small thing to cultivate the human seed by ever better and higher methods at each succeeding stage of human development. Rather is it the greatest and most momentous work each generation has to perform.*

As with religion, so with the study of Nature; it was not in Fröbel's view a mere branch of knowledge that might or might not be taken up; it was the necessary initiation into all other knowledge, as affording at once the direct manifestation of God's laws in the universe, and the field of practical training for all those faculties whereby man takes possession of the world of matter, lives in it and by it, and makes it subserve the higher law of his spiritual being. Fröbel ever contended, as we have seen above, against the mischievous opposition between nature and spirit, for to his apprehension the spirit of the Most High still brooded over the world of matter, and informed its every part; but the conviction that man, the moral being, owes highest allegiance to the moral law, that his spiritual nature is what lifts him to a region above mere earthly things, however grand or beautiful—this, it need hardly be said, was in one sense the very pivot of his system. "Nature, man,

* "Erinnerungen," p. 28.

and God," he would say, "these are all we can know of the universe, and man is the link, the central point in which the natural and the spiritual unite." To separate them, therefore, is to be as false to philosophy as to religion. It is impossible to choose among the many passages in Madame von Marenholtz's recollections that give evidence of this conviction; it runs throughout his system of education; the latter would fall to the ground without it. On nothing, therefore, is it more important for teachers to meditate than on this point; for they must remember that when a certain elementary knowledge of natural science is required of them, it is far less for the sake of the few facts they can gather than for the spirit of such knowledge, which they should in some measure make their own. They must, indeed, be able to direct the child's attention to certain facts, and to help him to observe and understand them; but far more must they have imbibed a love of Nature, a habit of observing her, of realising the unfailing presence of law through every change. They must have cultivated through natural objects the sense of the beautiful—the sense of the great harmonies of the universe that proclaim it God's world through all the mysteries and obscurities which dim our vision while hemmed in by the conditions of earthly life.

It is in this manner that Kindergarten teachers need to study science; a poor alphabet of science only can it be, but enough to give to an intelligent mind conceptions, views, and pleasures of a new order, which are specially fitted to draw out the capacities and sympathies of young children.

The study of Nature serves also another purpose in Fröbel's system; it is the field in which the active faculties of children are to be occupied. The Kindergarten occupations train active power and dexterity, according to a natural order; some fact of Nature, some law is made manifest to the childish understanding at the same moment that he has acquired a new power. The exercise of thought and the exercise of the hand and the senses are thus combined and associated with a new sense of enjoyment. The creative faculty in man—one of the highest marks of the God-like in his nature—can only in childhood be exercised among the objects of the material world of which it is his privilege to take possession. Man is not destined only to think and to know; he must act, and produce; his thoughts must be expressed in outward form, his convictions in conduct; and practical activity and ability give to such expression both power and independence.

Madame von Marenholtz, who has so admirably interpreted the views of Fröbel in former works, reports in repeated conversations his earnest conviction of the necessity of correcting by active work the one-sided intellectual culture given in school education. One whole class of human faculties is in such education set aside and neglected, the logical faculty is cultivated at the expense of observation, accuracy of the senses, practical judgments, and originality. It is through the study of natural phenomena and laws, and through work in which those laws must be obeyed, that this valuable part of human culture is achieved, and also that the desire for knowledge

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Madame von Marenholtz speaks of the "truly fatherly love with which Fröbel regarded his teacher-pupils, who in like manner bore the strongest affection and veneration for him. These affectionate relations within the institution made the most pleasing impressions on all who came within the Marienthal circle, and awoke the sympathy even of outsiders. This feeling," she continues, "was much kept up by the long walks together which we often took in the lovely neighbourhood of Liebenstein. When I once remarked to Fröbel, how happy this feeling of common interest and companionship made me feel, he replied, 'Yes, but that is only possible where one idea rules and binds us together. An idea alone can produce truly spiritual harmony.' How true this has been in politics, in religion, in philanthropy! Stronger, thank God, than all ties of interest, has ever been the tie forged by acknowledging One Ideal worthy to live and die for."

This community of feeling and interest Fröbel loved to express in outer form by days set apart for enjoyment, family festivals, birthdays, long expeditions that would end with a sunset hymn, as the fading of a glorious summer day was watched from some neighbouring hill. The same feeling prompted the *Spielfest*, held during the summer of 1850 in the park of the old castle of Altenstein, the account of which is one of the most interesting episodes of Madame von M. Bülow's narrative. It had been planned in concert with Middendorff, whose presence was felt to be abso-

lutely necessary on such an occasion. More than 300 children from four neighbouring villages were assembled; there were flowers, garlands, songs, all appropriate and symbolical expressions of harmony and joy, such as Fröbel loved. The many young women, trained by him as teachers, accompanied the children, and Kindergarten games and dances, in all of which Fröbel and Middendorff joined unweariedly, were carried on through several happy hours, to the delight of the children and also of a large assembly of spectators. Among the latter was the Duchess Ida, who sent refreshments for the children.

The Spielfest was not, like an ordinary school feast, an interruption of educational work or a mere reward in the shape of pleasure; it was part of the education itself, part of that which was to raise and civilise the young creatures while following the laws of Nature. "It is a great educational mistake," Fröbel maintained, "to deprive childhood and youth of innocent enjoyment. For Nature has put in the heart the desire for and the striving after it. As it would do injury to physical development if real natural wants were denied, so is the soul made to suffer, and is stunted in its development, when the craving for recreation and enjoyment is repressed."

It was not only for children, but for all, that Fröbel held enjoyment to be a valuable part of life, and considered the united expression of enjoyment as a part of religion. As the Olympian games were to the Greeks, so, he thought, national feasts celebrating great deeds, heroic memories, national events, should find place among us; and children's play-feasts, which

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seem a natural expression of the feeling kindled by the training in common in the Kindergarten, would prepare the way. Thus, as with everything in his mind, small things were the symbols of great things; childish steps lead to the path which shall be trodden by the man, and all parts of life are connected in links binding the whole forward progress of the race together.

One of the strangest accusations that the enemies of Fröbel have brought against him was that of irreligion, whereas religion was to him so completely the all in all of life that none can understand his system who do not bear in mind his conviction of the all-pervading presence of the Most High, in which literally all created things "live and move and have their being." To vivify Christianity by training new generations to understand it better was the earnest hope of his life.

Madame von Marenholtz's "recollections" abound with evidence of this ever-present sense of religion in Fröbel's life and opinions. It was in his old age that she knew him, when the struggles, the too ardent hopes and too bitter disappointments of long laborious years were over, and he was calmly, though ceaselessly, working out his latest and most cherished schemes. His utterances then were from the fulness of long experience and thought; and most remarkable among them is the habitual religious fervour, the earnest struggling after union with God in every effort he made, in every hope he entertained for the human race.

Fröbel's religious views were not separate from his

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educational views, they were parts of one whole: there was indeed, so to speak, no one section of his opinions that could be taken out for separate discussion or criticism, to be accepted or rejected alone. His method of viewing and studying Nature was part of his religion. His religion was bound up with the observation of Nature in which he read the laws of God. And his views of education are founded both on religion and reverence for Nature which meet in the contemplation of the human being, whose wonderful gifts and capabilities have to be trained to serve and love God amid the wonders of His creation; who is destined from generation to generation to obtain more complete empire over the outer world in which he is placed, and to work in a higher moral sphere as he more and more recognises the laws of his own moral being.

Thus, while Fröbel deprecates all teaching of creeds and formulas to little children, he would have their life impregnated, so to speak, with religion. Admiration awakened by observation of Nature; desire for knowledge first stirring among unknown wonders and mysteries, the sense of dependence, the certainty of love and protection; all these things were ceaselessly to minister to the awakening and fostering of the religious feeling in the child. The time for words and abstractions comes after.

"We must open the eyes of our children," he says, "that they may learn to know the Creator through His creation. Only then, when they have found God the Creator through the help of visible things, or seen Him foreshadowed in them, will they be able to appre-

hend the meaning of the term God in spirit and in truth, and learn to be Christians. First comes the visible world, and then the invisible truth, the idea. These opposites, visible and invisible, must for the young child be united by concrete images, not by words, which at most give him only a vague impression. My 'Mother's Songs' show how this work may be begun . . ."

Without religious preparation in childhood no true religion, no transformation after the likeness of God is possible for man. Belief in God is indeed born in every human creature, it has only to be awakened rightly; but it must be awakened, or it remains without life.*

"It is a great fault in the religious instruction of the present day," he says again, "that the opposition between nature and the spirit has been most dwelt upon, instead of leading the childish mind rather to see the harmony between them, and that the cessation of discord is God's purpose." This would be more consonant with nature. "For," he continues, "the eye of the child first perceives similarity, connections, and binding links, and afterwards only difference and contrasts."

"In these days," he says in another place, "men while dwelling upon the spirit have forgotten nature and objects in abstractions. Words are separated from things, and as mere words are mostly misunderstood."

Madame von Marenholtz quotes with approbation Middendorff's opinion that the long perverted and

* "Erinnerungen," see pp. 20, 21.

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misunderstood spirit of Christianity will kindle with new and higher light among men whenever Fröbel's system of education shall have found its full application. But how, she asks, with some discouragement, is this to come to pass? And Middendorff replies, "It can only be if we patiently nourish small beginnings, and cast abroad the seed which perhaps long after we are gone will spring up." Truly it is no small thing to cultivate the human seed by ever better and higher methods at each succeeding stage of human development. Rather is it the greatest and most momentous work each generation has to perform.*

As with religion, so with the study of Nature; it was not in Fröbel's view a mere branch of knowledge that might or might not be taken up; it was the necessary initiation into all other knowledge, as affording at once the direct manifestation of God's laws in the universe, and the field of practical training for all those faculties whereby man takes possession of the world of matter, lives in it and by it, and makes it subserve the higher law of his spiritual being. Fröbel ever contended, as we have seen above, against the mischievous opposition between nature and spirit, for to his apprehension the spirit of the Most High still brooded over the world of matter, and informed its every part; but the conviction that man, the moral being, owes highest allegiance to the moral law, that his spiritual nature is what lifts him to a region above mere earthly things, however grand or beautiful—this, it need hardly be said, was in one sense the very pivot of his system. "Nature, man,

* "Erinnerungen," p. 28.

and God," he would say, "these are all we can know of the universe, and man is the link, the central point in which the natural and the spiritual unite." To separate them, therefore, is to be as false to philosophy as to religion. It is impossible to choose among the many passages in Madame von Marenholtz's recollections that give evidence of this conviction; it runs throughout his system of education; the latter would fall to the ground without it. On nothing, therefore, is it more important for teachers to meditate than on this point; for they must remember that when a certain elementary knowledge of natural science is required of them, it is far less for the sake of the few facts they can gather than for the spirit of such knowledge, which they should in some measure make their own. They must, indeed, be able to direct the child's attention to certain facts, and to help him to observe and understand them; but far more must they have imbibed a love of Nature, a habit of observing her, of realising the unfailing presence of law through every change. They must have cultivated through natural objects the sense of the beautiful—the sense of the great harmonies of the universe that proclaim it God's world through all the mysteries and obscurities which dim our vision while hemmed in by the conditions of earthly life.

It is in this manner that Kindergarten teachers need to study science; a poor alphabet of science only can it be, but enough to give to an intelligent mind conceptions, views, and pleasures of a new order, which are specially fitted to draw out the capacities and sympathies of young children.

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The study of Nature serves also another purpose in Fröbel's system; it is the field in which the active faculties of children are to be occupied. The Kindergarten occupations train active power and dexterity, according to a natural order; some fact of Nature, some law is made manifest to the childish understanding at the same moment that he has acquired a new power. The exercise of thought and the exercise of the hand and the senses are thus combined and associated with a new sense of enjoyment. The creative faculty in man—one of the highest marks of the God-like in his nature—can only in childhood be exercised among the objects of the material world of which it is his privilege to take possession. Man is not destined only to think and to know; he must act, and produce; his thoughts must be expressed in outward form, his convictions in conduct; and practical activity and ability give to such expression both power and independence.

Madame von Marenholtz, who has so admirably interpreted the views of Fröbel in former works, reports in repeated conversations his earnest conviction of the necessity of correcting by active work the one-sided intellectual culture given in school education. One whole class of human faculties is in such education set aside and neglected, the logical faculty is cultivated at the expense of observation, accuracy of the senses, practical judgments, and originality. It is through the study of natural phenomena and laws, and through work in which those laws must be obeyed, that this valuable part of human culture is achieved, and also that the desire for knowledge

can be awakened. Rarely indeed can it be kindled in children save through external objects.

Doubtless the impulse to seek knowledge is inborn in man, but to cultivate and direct it is the main work of education. "Would," said Fröbel, "that we could open the way for this one conviction, that the pure impulse to seek truth is the only real ground for mental culture; that love of truth alone makes knowledge fruitful, which without it remains lifeless."*

It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that the idea of utilising, for the purpose of methodical education, not only the earliest childhood, but even the first unconscious period of infancy, is the fundamental and original idea of Fröbel's system. Again and again in this volume does the subject recur. He was never weary of repeating that the mother's training must precede the Kindergarten, as this must precede the school; they are the natural steps in a natural process of development. "The infant soul," as he said, "awaking in this world does not wait till school-time to use its senses, its natural organs . . . the unfolding of the spiritual faculties begins with the first breath, and ends with the last; and the assistance given according to nature to this development is education." †

In another place he says, "What then can we do towards the right unfolding of this germ of the future life, which contains the whole future man with all his highest and finest capabilities? We must give the child from its birth the free and multifarious use of

* "Erinnerungen," p. 141.

† Ibid. p. 139.

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its powers ; and such is the purpose of my games and occupations, which exercise in every way the yet veiled faculties of the infant. But we must not, as it has often been erroneously understood, train at first the bodily faculties only through exercises of the limbs and senses, and then later, when school-time is come, bring the mental faculties alone into exercise ; but at all times and through the whole period of childhood must both be exercised and trained together. The mind unfolds with and through its physical organs, which during the earthly life are inseparably bound up with it. The play of childish years will strengthen both the powers of the mind as well as of the body, when we know how to transform the first activity of the child to a free-productive, or creating activity. The will is strengthened through free action, the moral disposition develops through the effort to search and to produce good and beautiful things, and the mind is fashioned as it gradually learns to think and to act according to law. Such free activity, however, sets aside the direct instruction and training by others which is not in harmony with this stage of development, and places self-training and self-teaching in their places. . . .”

In Fröbel’s view of harmony throughout the universe and of the supremacy of the moral law, it is natural that the destruction of selfishness should become the highest object of the educator. For selfishness isolates the individual from the community and kills the living principle of love. Thus to *learn to love* is one of the highest results of a right education ; to break the selfishness of the individual, and to lead him from

the first stage of social life in the family, to all successive stages up to the love of mankind, or to the highest self-denial, through which he rises to harmony with God.

Universal moral progress depends greatly, he felt, upon the early creation of pure associations in little children, upon the effort made from the very dawn of life to awaken and set free the *ideal* side of the human being, in order to give a counterpoise to the imperious wants of the senses, and as far as possible to hinder the springing up of lower desires. The awakening of the sense of beauty offers the means best adapted for this purpose, so long as thought still slumbers in the childish soul. For this reason, from the earliest years the child's eyes, through form, colour and the play of light, and his ears through sounds, should be opened to all lovely things, and the feeble, childish powers thus used and prepared to receive the perception of the beautiful.

Closely connected with the subject of infant training is that of the fitness of women to undertake it; and no subject comes more frequently forward in the conversation recorded by Madame Marenholtz than the sacred character of women's mission as the educators of the race. Vain must be every hope of reform, if they do not rise to the height of the duties they have too long but half understood.

"Women," said Middendorff, "must learn to look upon their educational mission as a sacred, priestly office."

Fröbel repeated continually: "The fate of nations lies far more in the hands of women—of mothers—

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than in those of rulers, or of the numerous innovators who are scarcely intelligible to themselves. We must train the educators of the human race, for without them the new generations cannot fulfil their mission."

Middendorff said one evening, as the friends were conversing in Fröbel's room, "You, Frau von Marenholtz, must found a union of women who shall look upon the holy cause of human education as their Apostolate, and shall apprehend the mission which falls to women in our days. No greater one exists than that of perfecting the human race through a truly worthy education." Fröbel took up the word. "Women," said he, "must learn that childhood and womanhood, the care of children and woman's life, are inseparably bound together; that they make one, and that God and Nature have placed in the hands of women the nurture of the tender human plant. Hitherto the female sex could play only a more or less subordinate part in human history, because great struggles were going on, and the political organisation of nations was not ready for her action; but the present state of civilisation requires nothing more imperatively than culture—the culture of every human power for the work of peace, for the labour of a higher civilisation. The culture of the individual, however, and therewith the culture of a whole people, depends mostly on the earliest training of the infant. For this reason women have to undertake the most important half of the problems of our time, a half which men are not able to solve. As educators of mankind, women, who till now have been only the physical mothers of the race, have the highest task

yet to accomplish." Madame von Marenholtz objected one day, with only too much truth, that "The greater number of women have not received the culture that fits them to apprehend the ideas that lie at the root of your system of education. The bare practical exercise of the thing, without the idea (the principle), is not fitted to draw out great mental power, or to satisfy the lively imagination of women. Their minds must first grasp the conception of how their own education, if conducted according to Nature and the wants of their own being, will be the means of unloosing the fetters of centuries, and will make them capable of admirable work such as we have no idea of now." *

The delight that Fröbel's pupils took in their Kindergarten work was expressed often and warmly in letters that came to him on his birthday, and the words were often repeated, "I can hardly express how happy I am in the midst of my children." † In later years it was, says Madame von Marenholtz, the same with her scholars. One of them said, "How difficult it was for me formerly to manage children, to make them obedient, while now, with Fröbel's occupations and with his educational principles, I succeed with the greatest facility, and can soon win and improve the most spoil and unruly children." Another said, "If only mothers would learn Fröbel's method of education, and practise it simultaneously with us, how they would improve, and how much trouble, care, and struggle would be spared on both sides!"

Another theory, which is indeed the central point of Fröbel's system of instruction, namely the law of

* Page 113.

† Page 116.

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contrasts and their connections, holds a large place in the conversations recorded by Frau von Marenholtz ; but I refrain from entering into it here, as too long and too abstruse for this slight notice of a book that deserves serious study. It would indeed be impossible in these few pages to touch, however briefly, on many subjects of gravest importance and interest which Frau von Marenholtz has brought together. One more trait only of Fröbel's mind I must mention, as characteristic of the true philosophical reformer ; this was his calm patience under misunderstanding, his willingness to bide the proof of time, his unshaken belief in ultimate success, never to gladden his own eyes indeed, but to lighten the work of life for other generations. As regarded his contemporaries, Fröbel was so conscious that his deepest views could not with advantage be laid before the world in its present state of opinion, that he refused to speak of them even to those who were most devoted to him, even to Madame von Marenholtz herself, till long and intimate intercourse had proved the congeniality of their minds. "The last word of my theory I shall carry to my grave," he had said, "the time is not ripe for it." "If, three hundred years after my death," he said, "my system of education is completely, and, according to its real principle, carried out through Europe, I shall rejoice in heaven." "How little could the greatest reformers," he would say, "men even like Stein and Hardenberg, see of the fruits of their efforts during their own lifetime !" "The contemporary world," adds Madame von Marenholtz, most truly, "is never ripe for understanding the thoughts of minds that have outstripped their age ;

and, indeed, a man who had been through
all the vicissitudes of the human necessity of
life, and of the necessity of confidence in
the future. He was a man of truth, he could afford to wait
while men turned and passed him by, leaving him to
play with children and instruct the mothers, who

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should carry his teaching in their hearts for the good of a new generation.

Madame von Marenholtz again spent the summer of 1851 at Liebenstein, and had made arrangements to have a permanent summer dwelling under the same roof with the Kindergarten. She was thus with him when the news came of the Berlin decree forbidding any Kindergarten in the Prussian States. It was communicated to her by the Duke, and it seemed so incredible that she thought it was a joke, but too soon found that it was bitter earnest; and men of influence, whom she spoke and wrote to, said it was vain for the present to hope for any change. One small compensation came to Fröbel in the course of the following winter; he was asked for the first time to attend the German meeting of schoolmasters at Gotha, showing that his views were beginning to be known and to attract attention. He went, and his wife wrote to Frau von Marenholtz, "As Fröbel entered the room in the middle of a speech, the whole assembly rose. He was cordially greeted by the president, and later spoke amidst profound attention, and was loudly applauded."

In April, 1852, Frau von Marenholtz was preparing to join the circle of friends at Liebenstein to celebrate Fröbel's birthday, and to bring as her gift on that occasion the hardly-gathered proceeds of a subscription made to assist young women in attending the training institution; but she was obliged by severe illness to forego this pleasure, nor did she ever see her revered friend again. The birthday festival was the

last joyful gathering he lived to take part in. Through May his health failed, and in June that noble life ended after a fortnight's illness, during which his love for his friends and for humanity and his trust in God were frequently uttered in words that seemed to grow more solemn and pathetic as they were felt to be his last.

Middendorff wrote to Frau von Marenholtz a touching account of his death and of the funeral, at which the officiating minister was a descendant of Luther's, whom Fröbel had rescued from poverty as a child and educated in his school. Middendorff afterwards published an account of these last days in a small tract, from which various passages are quoted. These, and quotations from the letters of friends and of ladies formerly pupils, complete this picture of the last years of a great and good man, given to us by one who, loving him, felt she could not better serve the cause he had most at heart than by making his own noble nature better known.

THE END.

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