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THE

EDUCATION OF MAN

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN AND ANNOTATED BY

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THIS work of Froebel admits us into his philosophy, and shows us the fundamental principles upon which he based the kindergarten system. His great word is *inner connection*. There must be an inner connection between the pupil's mind and the objects which he studies, and this shall determine what to study. There must be an inner connection in those objects among themselves which determines their succession and the order in which they are to be taken up in the course of instruction. Finally, there is an inner connection within the soul that unites the faculties of feeling, perception, phantasy, thought, and volition, and determines the law of their unfolding. Inner connection is in fact the law of development, the principle of evolution, and Froebel is the Educational Reformer who has done more than all the rest to make valid in education what the Germans call the "developing method."

Unlike Pestalozzi, Froebel was a philosopher. The great word of the former is *immediate perception* (*anschauen*). Pestalozzi struggled to make all education begin with immediate perception and abide with it for a long period. Because, say his followers, sense-

perception is the source of all our knowledge. Froebel and his disciples would defend the great educational reformer by saying that by beginning with immediate perception education is sure of arousing the self-activity of the pupil. Froebel's aim is to educate the pupil through his self-activity. This, we see at once, goes much further than the cultivation of perception. The pupil unfolds his will-power quite as much as his sense-perception, and by this arrives in the surest way at thinking reason, which is the culmination of self-activity. The child is to begin with what he can easily grasp. That is well. But he must also begin with that which is attractive to him. The best of all is to begin with that activity which, while easy and attractive, leads him forward, develops all his powers, and makes him master of himself.

Froebel goes down into the genesis of objects of study in order to discover the relation of such objects to the nourishment of mind. The chemists and physiologists have ascertained the relation of bread and meat to the sustenance of human life. Froebel has investigated the relation of the child's activities in play to the growth of his mind. The mind grows by self-revelation. In play the child ascertains what he can do, and discovers his possibilities of will and thought by exerting his power spontaneously. In work he follows a task prescribed for him by another, and does not reveal his own proclivities and inclinations, but another's. In play he reveals his own original power. But there are two selves in the child—one is peculiar, arbitrary, capricious, different from all others, and hostile to them, and is founded on short-sighted egotism. The other

self is reason, common to all humanity, unselfish and universal, feeding on truth and beauty and holiness. Both of these selves are manifested in play. There is revelation of bad as well as of good. Froebel, accordingly, attempts to organize a system of education that will unfold the rational self and chain down the irrational. He wishes to cultivate selfhood and repress selfishness. This must be done, if done effectively, by the pupil himself. If he does not chain the demon within him, external constraint will do it, but at the same time place its chains on the human being who has permitted his demon to go loose. Self-conquest is the only basis of true freedom.

The insights of Froebel into the unfolding of rational selfhood have enabled him to organize the method of infant education to which he, in 1840, gave the name of "Kindergarten." In the work here presented to the public, which was published fourteen years before that date, we have a discussion of the essential ideas which moved him in his subsequent experiments to discover the methods and more especially the *appliances* to be employed in early education.

Pestalozzi uttered the noble sentiment that all should be educated. All children of men are children of the same God, and all are born for an infinite career. This Christian doctrine he construed to mean that all should receive alike a school education, developing the intellect, and giving it possession of the power to master the treasures of science—the wisdom of the race. This intellectual education it should have, as well as religious and moral education and training in a special industrial calling (education in religion, morality, and industry had

long been conceded). Froebel shares Pestalozzi's enlightened sentiments, but goes further in the matter of method. He invents an efficient means for securing the development of the child between the ages of three and six years—a period when the child is not yet ready for the conventional studies of the school—a period when he is not mature enough for work, and when there is no temptation on the part of the parent to employ him at any labor. The child has, by the beginning of his fourth year, begun to outgrow the merely family life, and to look at the outside world with interest. He endeavors to symbolize life as it appears to him by plays and games. The parents are unable to give the child within the house all the education that he needs at this period. He needs association with other children and with teachers from beyond the family circle. Froebel's invention is the happiest educational means for this symbolic epoch of infancy.

Froebel sees better than other educators the true means of educating the feelings, and especially the religious feelings. He reaches those feelings that are the germs of the intellect and will. It must be always borne in mind that clear ideas and useful deeds exist in the heart as undefined sentiments before they are born in the intellect and will.

Froebel is, in a peculiar sense, a religious teacher. All who read this book on the Education of Man will see that he is not only full of faith in God, but that his intellect is likewise illumined by theology. He sees the worlds of physical nature and human history as firmly established on a divine unity which to him is no abstraction but a creative might and a living Providence.

God to him is infinite reason. Pestalozzi has the piety of the heart, while Froebel has also the piety of the intellect, which sees God as the principle of truth.

The work before us is divided substantially into two parts: The first deals with general principles and considers the development of man during infancy and boyhood. The second part (beginning with § 60) discusses the chief subjects of instruction, grouping them under (1) religion, (2) natural science and mathematics, (3) language, (4) art.

Especial attention is called to §§ 68–73, wherein the author deduces the forms of the crystal exhaustively from the nature of force and space, and makes some application of it to botany and human development. This deduction is worthy of the fertile and suggestive mind of Schelling or Oken. In subsequent sections he asserts (to our no small surprise) that even mathematics is the expression of life as such.

But Parts I and II (§§ 1–44) contain the most important doctrines of the work, and deserve a thorough annual study by every teacher's reading club in the land. A good plan for study is to form small classes of three to eight members, and meet weekly for two hours' discussion of the text, sentence by sentence. The slower one goes over the book, the faster grows his original power of thinking, and his ability to read profound and difficult writings.

Perhaps the greatest merit of Froebel's system is to be found in the fact that it furnishes a deep philosophy for the teachers. Most pedagogic works furnish only a code of management for the school-room. Froebel gives a view of the world in substantial agreement with

the spiritual systems of philosophy that have prevailed in the world. A view of the world is a perpetual stimulant to thought—always prompting one to reflect on the immediate fact or event before him, and to discover its relation to the ultimate principle of the universe. It is the only antidote for the constant tendency of the teacher to sink into a dead formalism, the effect of too much iteration and of the practice of adjusting knowledge to the needs of the feeble-minded by perpetual explanation of what is already simple *ad nauseam* for the mature intelligence of the teacher. It produces a sort of pedagogical cramp in the soul for which there is no remedy like a philosophical view of the world, unless, perhaps, it be the study of the greatest poets, Shakespeare, Dante, or Homer. It is, I am persuaded, this fact—that Froebel refers his principles to a philosophic view of the world—that explains the almost fanatical zeal of his followers, and, what is far more significant, the fact that those who persistently read his works are always growing in insight and in power of higher achievement.

W. T. Harris.

Concord, Mass., *August*, 1887.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

"The Education of Man" appeared in 1826, under the title: *Die Menschenerziehung, die Erziehungs- Unterrichts- und Lehrkunst, angestrebt in der allgemeinen deutschen Erziehungsanstalt zu Keilhau, dargestellt von dem Vorsteher derselben, F. W. A. Froebel. 1. Band bis zum begonnenen Knabenalter. Keilhau, 1826. Verlag der Anstalt. Leipzig in Commission bei C. F. Doerffling. 497 S.**

The very title-page reveals the history of the growth and development of this remarkable book. Similarly we read in the expressive countenance of a mature man or woman the life history of its possessor.

Froebel established the *Educational Institute* at Keilhau, a small village of about one hundred inhabitants, in 1817. It was not a business enterprise in any sense of the word. Yielding to the entreaties of his widowed sister-in-law, he had given up excellent exter-

* The Education of Man, the Art of Education, Instruction, and Training, aimed at in the Educational Institute at Keilhau, written by its Principal, F. W. A. Froebel. Volume I; to the beginning of Boyhood. Keilhau, 1826. Published by the Institute. Sold in Commission at Leipzig by C. F. Doerffling. 497 pp.

nal prospects in Berlin in order to undertake the education of her three boys. To these, two other nephews were added, and Middendorff had brought a younger brother of Langethal, who himself joined the little band a few months later. Thus the six boys and the three high-souled men—Froebel, Middendorff, and Langethal—constituted the nucleus of this remarkable enterprise, established wholly in the interest of the new educational ideas of Froebel.

In spite of many difficulties and vicissitudes that would have discouraged less faithful men, however, the institute grew even beyond the dimensions originally planned for it. Froebel had intended to limit it to twenty-four pupils and the three teachers mentioned, but circumstances seemed to render it desirable or necessary to admit a greater number of pupils. Possibly this very success aroused the hostility of low-minded men, which led to persecution by the Prussian Government on political and religious grounds, and the scattering of the three friends; and would have submerged the institute itself had it not been saved by the tact of Barop, who joined the enterprise in 1823, and assumed its control in 1833. Froebel himself had left it in 1831.

The persecutions on the part of the Prussian Government induced the local duke to send Superintendent Zech to inspect the institution. The report of this visit throws so much light upon the character of Froebel's work and aims that I translate its essential portions in this place. He says, among other things:

"Both days which I passed in the institute, almost as one of its members, as it were, were in every way

pleasant to me, highly interesting, and instructive. They increased and strengthened my respect for the institute as a whole, as well as for its director, who upheld and maintained it amid the storms of care and want with rare persistence and with the purest and most unselfish zeal. It is most pleasing to feel the influence which goes out from the buoyant, vigorous, free, and yet orderly spirit that pervades this institution, both in the lessons and at other times.

"I found here what is never seen in actual practical life, a thoroughly and intimately united family of at least sixty members, living in quiet harmony, all showing that they gladly perform the duties of their very different positions; a family held together by the strong ties of mutual confidence, and in which, consequently, every member seeks the interest of the whole, where all things thrive in joy and love, apparently without effort.

"With great respect and real affection all turn to the principal; the little five-year-old children hang about his knees, while his friends and assistants hear and honor his advice with the confidence due to his insight and experience, and to his indefatigable zeal in the interest of the institution; and he himself seems to love in brotherliness and friendship his fellow-workers, as the props and pillars of his life-work, which to him is truly a holy work.

"It is evident that a feeling of such perfect harmony and unity among the teachers must in every way exert the most salutary influence on the discipline and instruction, and on the pupils themselves. The love and respect in which the latter hold all their teachers is

shown in a degree of attention and obedience that renders needless almost all disciplinary severity. During the two days I heard no reproving word from the lips of the teachers, neither in the joyous tumult of intermission nor during the time of instruction; the merriest confusion with which, after instruction, all sought the play-ground, was free from every indication of ill-breeding, of rude and unmannerly, and, most of all, of immoral conduct. Perfectly free and equal among themselves, reminded of their privileges of rank and birth neither by their attire nor by their names—for each pupil is called only by his Christian name—the pupils, great and small, live in joyousness and serenity, freely intermingling, as if each obeyed only his own law, like the sons of one father; and while all seem unrestrained, and use their powers and carry on their plays in freedom, they are under the constant supervision of their teachers, who either observe them or take part in their plays, equally subject with them to the laws of the game.

"Every latent power is aroused in so large and united a family, and finds a place where it can exert itself; every inclination finds an equal or similar inclination, more clearly pronounced than itself, by which it can strengthen itself; but no impropriety can thrive, for whoever would commit some excess punishes himself, the others no longer need him, he is simply left out of the circle. If he would return, he must learn to adapt himself, he must become a better boy. Thus the boys guide, reprove, punish, educate, cultivate one another unconsciously, by the most varied incitements to activity and by mutual restriction.

"The agreeable impression of the institution as a whole is increased by the domestic order which is everywhere manifest, and which alone can give coherence to so large a family by a punctuality free from all pedantry, and by a cleanliness which is rarely met in so high a degree in educational institutions.

"This vigorous and free, yet well-ordered, outer life, has its perfect counterpart in the inner life of heart and mind that is here aroused and established. Instruction leads the five-year-old child simply to find himself, to differentiate himself from external things, and to distinguish these among themselves, to know clearly what he sees in his nearest surroundings, and, at the same time, to designate it with the right words, to enjoy his first knowledge as the first contribution toward his future intellectual treasure. Self-activity of the mind is the first law of instruction; . . . slowly, continuously, and in logical succession it proceeds . . . from the simple to the complex, from the concrete to the abstract, so well adapted to the child and his needs, that he learns as eagerly as he plays; nay, I noticed how the little children, whose lesson had been somewhat delayed by my arrival, came in tears to the principal of the institution and asked 'should they to-day always play and never learn, and were only the big boys to be taught to-day?'

"In the last winter semester the pupils of the highest grade of the classical course read Horace, Plato, Phaedrus, and Demosthenes, and translated Cornelius Nepos into Greek. On the day of my first visit, when I looked more closely into the elementary instruction, I could not suppress the wish that the instruction might

be such in all elementary schools. Now, when I inspected the classical instruction, which has been in operation fully only since 1820, I was compelled to admire the progress and the intense thoroughness of the school in this short time; . . . and I was as thoroughly gratified by the instruction as I was by the discipline.

"My experience was the same as that of all impartial examiners of the institution. Of all strangers who had visited and inspected the institution, and whose opinion I heard, none left without being pleased, and many whom I deem specially competent came away full of enthusiasm, and fully appreciated the high aim of the institution, and the perfectly natural method it follows in order to attain its object as surely and completely as possible. This object is by no means mere knowledge, but the free, self-active development of the mind from within. Nothing is added from without except to enlighten the mind, to strengthen the pupil's power, and to add to his joy by enhancing his consciousness of growing power. The principal of the institution beholds with enthusiasm the nobility that adorns the mind and heart of the all-sidedly developed human being; in the high destiny of such a man he has found the aim of his work, which is to develop the *whole* man, whose inner being is established between true *insight* and true *religiousness* as its poles. Every pupil is to unfold this from his own inner life, and is to become in the serene consciousness of his own power what this power may enable him to become.

"What the pupils know is not a shapeless mass, but has form and life, and is, if at all possible, immediately applied in life. Each one is, as it were, familiar with

himself; there is not a trace of thoughtless repetition of the words of others, nor of vague knowledge among any of the pupils. What they express they have inwardly seen, and is enounced as from inner necessity with clearness and decision. Even the objections of the teachers can not change their opinion until they have clearly seen their error. Whatever they take up they must be able *to think;* what they can not think they do not take up. Even dull grammar, with its host of rules, begins to live with them, inasmuch as they are taught to study each language with reference to the history, habits, and character of the respective people. Thus seen, the institution is a gymnasium in the fullest sense, for all that is done becomes mental gymnastics.

"Happy the children who can be taught here from earliest school-life (six years)! If all schools could be transformed into such educational institutions, they would send out in a few generations a people intellectually stronger, and, in spite of original depravity, purer, nobler."

I have reproduced this documentary evidence because I desired to show that Froebel was not a dreamer nor an empty enthusiast, but that his "Education of Man," like all his other writings of this and subsequent periods, flowed from the fullness of an earnest, practical life, that struggled in every way to utter itself productively, creatively, in full, teeming deeds.

Again, I desired to show once for all that his educational principles and methods, like his practical educational activity, were not confined to the earliest years of childhood, but embraced the entire impressionable period of human life. It is true, the succeeding vol-

umes of the "Education of Man" were never written; not, however, because they were not clear and complete in Froebel's mind when he gave us his first volume, but rather because he was too much taken up with efforts to live them out practically against untold hindrances.

The report of Commissioner Zeh averted, indeed, the immediate and forcible dissolution of the Keilhau Institute, but it could not undo the indirect evil effects of the Prussian persecution. By this the little colony was reduced to straits that placed book-publishing and even book-writing beyond the power of its members. It is true, in the very next year after Commissioner Zeh's report (in 1826), the first volume appeared. Yet the institute had not enough popularity left to induce a publisher to assume the risk of the work, although there was still enough substance and faith in the little band to enable it to do this independently.

Immediately after the publication, however, affairs rapidly grew worse. In 1829 the number of pupils had been reduced from sixty to five, and in 1831 Froebel was driven from his post, although the enterprise was still kept up in the hands of friends.

The greatness of Froebel's soul appears at no time in a brighter light than it does in these days of trouble. On the first day of April, 1829, he wrote: "I look upon my work as *unique* in our time, as *necessary* for it, and as *salutary* for all time. In its action and reaction, it will give to mankind all that it needs and seeks in every direction of its tendencies and being. I have no complaint whatever that others should think differently; I can endure them; I even can—as I have proved—live with them; but I can not have with them the same