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THE IMPORTANCE

OF

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

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OF
PRIMARY EDUCATION.

LECTURE I

Groundwork: Study



DELIVERED BY

MRS. N. ALMEE COURTRIGHT,
At the Muthyalpet High School,

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BEFORE THE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

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THIS Lecture is the first of a series which are to be delivered before the Madras Primary Teachers' Association throughout the year, under the general subject "The Importance of Primary Education." It is our intention to publish each lecture in pamphlet form, as soon as delivered, and later to combine the series in book form. We propose to translate these lectures in the vernaculars of the Presidency, and publish them for the benefit of Primary Schoolmasters.

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ARYA PATHASALA,
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The Importance of Primary Education.

GROUNDWORK : CHILD-STUDY.

It affords me much pleasure to have this opportunity of talking to you, Teachers of little children, upon the importance of your undertaking.

I heartily commend the purposes of your organization, and I trust there will prove strength enough in your union to enable you to lift your profession to a status adequate to its importance, and that you will be able to demand from others a recognition of the great value, dignity and responsibility involved in the training of primary children.

But to demand such homage from others, implies intrinsic *worth*. Any association is never greater than the members who compose it; hence it rests with each of you individually to do what you can to prove yourself worthy of your calling.

Before I have done, I hope to have presented my subject so clearly as to be of help to you in understanding the modern idea as to what constitutes primary education; and to suggest what it is possible for you as an organization to do, to further the work you are engaged in.

In the West what is known as child-study, occupies to-day the most conspicuous place in the arena of education. It had its beginning early in the nineteenth century when Rousseau and Pestalozzi made the first comprehensive attempts towards finding a solid basis for the science of education. They are recorded as being the first to have studied the mental and physical actions of children to arrive at the motive power for such actions. By the middle of the century, child-study or rather child-psychology became a deeply interesting study to students of education, especially in Germany. As early as 1867 we find that the teachers in Berlin arranged for regular courses of lectures on pedagogy. These teachers subjected their pupils to examinations which were intended to reveal their intellectual status ; *i.e.*, would show for what kinds of knowledge they had an interest and how the reproduction of the matter learned, proceeded.

From small, almost inconsequent, beginnings, child-study has advanced in recognized importance. Indeed one might easily declare that there exists to-day three distinct lines of the science of child-study ; that which investigates the (1) physical-child, (2) that which deals with the phenomena of mind, and (3) concerns itself more especially with the moral or ethical aspect of development.

To really grasp the profound and far-reaching significance of the psychological and physio-

logical child, it is necessary to enquire into the biological cause and effect. It is certainly an object lesson on LIFE itself to trace the genesis of the different form manifestations, to see how *necessity* literally creates *faculty*; to make comparisons not only between and among organisms of the same species, but between the several kingdoms, and especially with the human.

From the minute nodule with nervous system so rudimentary as to consist merely of diverging threads, up to humanity, is a chasm science has bridged with its theory of evolution. Darwin, Spencer, Wallace, and Fiske are authorities on this subject, which is of especial interest in child-study, as it explains the part played by the lengthening period of infancy in the animal species. In tracing the few threads and minute centres existing in *inferior* organisms, we see that there is no nervous system or organization present; that there is nothing which corresponds to what we call, *brain*; that all the actions are reflex and are all apparently due to an impulse which comes from without the animal itself. We observe that the young are brought into the world able to take care of themselves, to react upon their environment at the mere contact of air or food, and to breathe, to digest, and to live an independent existence. Each of these reflex actions is performed with automatic precision; and as long as the species exists

there is no perceptible progressive change in the organism. Gradually as we ascend in our investigation, we find there is an intimate and important connection between the outer environment and the nature of the inner structure of the animal ; with increased complexity of structure and function we find the animal more keen in response to the play of the organs of sense, and remark the increasing dependency of the young.

Finally, the human animal has evolved a physical and psychical structure of such surpassing complexity and co-ordination that there is not time for all the capacities to become organized before birth ; but the human young possesses latent potentialities of an order which renders *it* capable of progression ; but as there were grades of the same species in the lower kingdoms, in the human order we find marked differences in races, so too, do we find a difference in the time of infancy prolonged between the young of the barbaric savage and of higher, civilized peoples.

Men of science postulate that the biological significance of the lengthened period of infancy lies in the fact that to it is due the organization and the stability of all family life. During the time of helpless dependency, the parents of the child are held together by a common centre of interest ; and it naturally follows that the more children born to parents, the greater the bond, and more enduring.

But the point of perhaps more immediate interest to students is that it is found possible to train every animal that has a period of infancy; and the longer this helpless condition continues, the more training is possible for it. Hence, because of the prolonged state of plasticity, human infants are susceptible of an educational training far greater and beyond the possibilities of the young of other species.

This fact proves the wisdom of employing judicious methods that will develop the child into a being of power and self-reliance, if we would avoid the dangers which result when little ones are subjected to harmful influences. The tendency of wrong conditions is to arrest growth in some direction, which will mar, in all likelihood, some of his faculties at least, to the mutual hurt of self and of the community.

I shall not bore you by tracing the evolution of the intelligence throughout the various Nature kingdoms, but will proceed to briefly delineate some practical phases of child-study. To quote from the "First comprehensive attempts at child-study," the result of the work of the Berlin Pedagogical Society. It is the main purpose of such study to determine the stages of intellectual growth, "for instruction and training can be successful only if they cohere with what is present in the child's mind. Equally true is the assertion that the teacher's method, selection and use of the

appliances for teaching (text-books, charts, etc.), essentially depend upon the number of ideas with which the children are supplied."

The following fourteen questions were given in the attempt to investigate the minds of children newly entering school:—

- (1) Who has seen the sun rise and set?
- (2) Who has seen the moon and the stars?
- (3) Who has seen a lark and heard it sing?
- (4) Who has seen a fish swimming in the water?
- (5) Who has seen a boat on a pond?
- (6) Who has been on the banks of a river?
- (7) Who has been on a mountain?
- (8) Who has been in the woods?
- (9) Who knows an oak tree?
- (10) A grain field?
- (11) Who knows what is to be done to make bread of grain?
- (12) Who has seen a shoe-maker, a joiner or a mason at work?
- (13) Who has been to church?
- (14) Who knows anything about God?

The results of the examination were tabulated. The report reads: "The ideas of natural objects were woefully lacking in the town children." Not one-fourth of the 500 children examined had seen the sun set; only one-half of that number had been at a pond or had climbed a hill or mountain. It is especially interesting to note that the girls have, at their entrance into school, throughout, fewer

ideas of the environment of their home than the boys.

You may be interested to know that the Board of Education in Chicago, America, has established a child-study department in connection with the public schools, and that the pupils are weighed, measured and tested otherwise, mentally, morally and physically. It was found that a child who was thought to be stupid was merely unable to hear properly, owing to some physical defect in the organs of hearing; another perhaps, was unable to see correctly. It was found too, that some children had more vitality during the morning session; others during the afternoon period; that the physical strength of pupils in the same standard varied greatly, etc., etc. The result of child-study investigation in these schools has resulted in establishing a special room for mentally defective children, and to greater insight being exercised by each teacher over her pupils that they may not be taxed beyond their capacities to work, and regularly are the children inspected as to the condition of general health, teeth, eyes, and hearing.

I realise that I have not done justice to this phase of the topic; but there is not time this afternoon to go further into details along this line of thought. Before passing on to another aspect, I will pay tribute to the science which has done so much to uncover the weak places

in the training of the young ; which has proved that no two minds are alike ; that each mind has a law of its own by which it grows ; that only so much knowledge is acquired as is apperceived and assimilated, and, finally, if we would avoid arrested development, we should consider the needs of the child, his internal, personal needs, and adapt to each mind the specific nutriment required.

In defence of material child-study, I should say that, *like truth*, it is not absolute, but relative ; and further, like truth, all that is put forth in its name should not be accepted as infallible ; for, while the science of the child has progressed until it is fundamentally as stable as that of other, recognised sciences, it is left with each Teacher to agree, to disprove or to add to existing knowledge as fast as his own investigations lead him to wisdom.

I have told you that the science of child-study might be considered under three topics. (1) physical, (2) mental, (3) moral or ethical. It is my purpose to treat under the third aspect, the educational doctrine of Frederick Froebel, the great kindergarten (child-garden) apostle.

Let me offer an emphatic denial that it is my intention to claim that all child-study which is not Froebellian in character, does not deal with moral or ethical questions ; or that the disciples of Froebel are narrow idealists. The excuse I offer for my treatment is, that

the writings of the illustrious German contain a practical philosophy of life, particularly as it relates to the child, which, (as far as it goes ; Froebel died before the completion of his entire scheme of education) is not only complete in itself, but of such meat as to be in advance of the educational work to-day, even, although Froebel labored and wrote as early as 1817 ; and, finally, that more than any other educator, does this reverent lover of the child, treat reasonably, the relation of *man* to God, in every thought he expressed. The comprehensive, all-sidedness then, of the philosophy of Froebel, is my apology for my attitude.

In order that you may have some conception of the philosophy of child-study as expounded by him, I have thought best to quote largely from Froebel's own writings, that *his* thought might not be weakened by *my* interpretation. But to get an adequate idea in order to fully appreciate the philosophy and the beauty of his aims, his books must be studied in their entirety.

The study of biology teaches us to regard each life-form as originally but a centre of energy ; differing in kind as it rises in degree, by means of what is blindly designated under several titles : inherent-force : power : motion ; and, although no man knows *what* this energy really is, we know that this elusive something—which defies all attempts of physical science to determine its exact nature—

pervades all living things ; and that the order of its action is from *within, outward*.

Froebel, throughout his book "The Education of Man," calls this something both, inner essence, and spirit.

Where the great teachers of the theory of evolution—attributing the action and interaction of external form and internal substance to generated physical motion—saw but the sequential working of physical law, Froebel saw a subtle force uniting the two, and controlling all motion ; this he calls the God which is inherent in all that IS.

Froebel writes : " It is the destiny and life-work of all things to unfold their essence, hence their divine being. It is the special destiny and life-work of man as an intelligent and rational being to become fully, vividly and clearly conscious of his essence." To acquire such knowledge means, to Froebel, attaining to harmony, in feeling, thinking, willing and doing. With reference to humanity, it means subordination of *self* to the common welfare and to the progressive development of mankind ; with reference to nature, it means a thoughtful subordination to her laws of development ; with reference to God, it means perfect faith

Froebel then, holds it the *duty of each individual* to seek for knowledge concerning the divine, spiritual and eternal principle, which animates surrounding nature ; which consti-

tutes the essence of nature and is permanently manifest in nature ; to seek to understand how the divine principle is the same in man as in nature ; and how both are governed by the same law ; that he may acknowledge that man and nature proceed from God and are conditioned by Him ; that both have their being in God, and, let me add upon my own responsibility, that *all is GOD*.

But, to educate one's self to a knowledge of the relation of God to mankind and nature, and to strive to lead a faithful, pure, holy life is not enough. Such wisdom should be continuously employed *through education* to raise humanity to self-conscious unity with God.

His idea of education is then, that it should be *based* on considerations of the inner essence of things as recognized by the spirit and as discerned through outward manifestations.

Educators, he warns us, should be wise enough to maintain a balance of judgment between the *outer* expression and the *inner* life of the child. The failure to understand this relation, Froebel holds, is the chief cause of antagonism and contention. He writes : " This furnishes constant occasion for innumerable false judgments concerning the motives of the young, for numberless failures in the education of children, for endless misunderstandings between parent and child, for so many unreasonable demands made upon children. Therefore, this truth, in its applica-

tion to parents, educators and teachers is of such great importance that they should strive to render themselves familiar with its application in the smallest details. This would bring into the relations between parents and children, pupils and educators, teacher and taught, a clearness, a constancy, a serenity which are now sought in vain : for the child that seems *outwardly* good, often is not good inwardly, *i.e.*, does not desire the good spontaneously, or from love, respect and appreciation ; similarly, the outwardly rough, stubborn, self-willed child that seems outwardly not good, frequently is filled with the liveliest, most eager, strongest desire for spontaneous goodness in his actions ; and the apparently inattentive boy frequently follows a certain fixed line of thought that withholds his attention from all external things."

Froebel then, "sees in the child a fresh tender bud of progressing humanity, and it is with reference to the divinity that to him lies in the child thus viewed that he calls for passive following and vigilant protection. He would have the educator "study the child as a struggling expression of an inner divine law * * * it is evident that this involves constant activity in judicious adjustment of surroundings, so that the child may be free from temptations and from the growth of unhealthy whims and pernicious tendencies ; while on the other hand, he may be supplied with

ample incentives and opportunities to unfold aright." "In the treatment of the things of nature," he declares, "we often take the right road; whereas, in the treatment of man, we go astray; and yet the forces that *act in both*, proceed from the *same source* and *obey the same law*."

Froebel constantly reiterates that from birth "it is highly important for man's present and later life that at this stage he absorb nothing morbid, low, mean * * * For, alas! often the whole life of man is not sufficient to efface what he has absorbed in childhood, the impressions of early youth, simply because his whole being, like a large eye, as it were, was opened to them and wholly given up to them. Often the hardest struggles of man *with himself*, and even the later and most adverse and oppressive events in his life, have their origin in this stage of development; for this reason the care of the infant is so important."

"Therefore the child should, from the very time of his birth, be viewed in accordance with his nature; treated correctly and given the free, all-sided use of his powers."

"At an early period the child should learn, apply and practice the most difficult of all arts—to hold fast the centre and fulcrum of his life, in spite of all digressions, disturbances and hindrances.

That educators may understand how to proceed with *their* task, of arriving at an ade-

quate knowledge of the school-child, Froebel begins at the beginning; *i.e.*, with the infant at birth. He says: "*The child's first utterance is that of force.* The operation of force * * * calls for counter-force; hence the first crying of the child, his pushing with his feet against whatever resists them, the holding fast of whatever touches his little hands."

"Soon after, and together with this, there is developed in the child sympathy. Hence his *smile*, his enjoyment, his delight, his vivacity in comfortable warmth, in clear light, in pure fresh air. This is the beginning of self-consciousness in its very first germs." "In accordance with the law of contrasts in the development of knowledge, the sense of hearing is the first to be developed in the child; later on, there follows, guided and incited by hearing, the sense of sight."

"With the advancing development of the senses there is developed in the child, simultaneously and symmetrically, the use of the body, of the limbs."

"External objects are themselves near, at rest, and invite rest; or, they are in motion, moving away and invite seizure, grasping, holding fast; or they are fixed in distant places or spaces, and thus invite him who would bring them nearer, to move toward them."

Thus is developed the use of the limbs in

sitting and lying, in grasping and holding, in walking and running.

"As soon as the activity of the senses, of the body and the limbs is developed to such a degree that the child begins self-activity to represent the *internal*, outwardly, the stage of infancy in human development ceases, and the stage of *childhood* begins."

"Up to this stage the inner being of man is still unorganized, undifferentiated."

"With language the expression and representation of the *internal* begins; with language, organization, or a differentiation with reference to ends and means, set in * * *."

"Now since this stage of human development requires that the child should learn to designate all things rightly, clearly and distinctly, it is essentially needful that all things should be brought before him rightly, clearly and distinctly * * *."

"The form used should be simple and closely adapted to the child's understanding. Thus, the words, "Baby, drink?" "See dog," etc., accompanied by some deliberate suitable gesture and a sympathetic countenance, will be solidly helpful to the child * * *."

To teach the child to feel the complexity of his body and the difference between his limbs, such sentences as "Give me your arm." "Where is your hand?" Should be asked the child.

In the command: "Bite your finger," a well

perceived action is involved, since "it induces reflection in its earliest phases, by tending to bring to the child's knowledge an object which, although it has an individuality of its own, is associated with the child."

But a less important is the * * * playful manner of leading the child to a knowledge of the members (of his body) which he cannot see. The nose, the ears, the tongue, and teeth, are to be pulled, gently, the nose, or ear, as if it were meant to separate them from the face or head, and, showing to the child the half-concealed end of finger or thumb and say "Here I have the ear, the nose," and the child quickly puts his hand to his ear or nose and smiles with intense joy to find them in their right places. In this *action* is aroused and *directed* in the child with a desire to *know*, even what he cannot see externally."

"In the same spirit * * * in order to lead him to use these things; 'Show me your tongue,' 'Show me your tooth,' Bite it with your tooth."

"In first it was the purpose to bring to the child's notice *objects as such*, and in their relative positions. It is now the intention to direct attention to these attributes and qualities. Say to the child 'The candle burns' * * * cautiously hold the child's finger toward the flame enabling him to feel the heat without being really burned, and guarding him against an unknown danger. Or, * * * say 'The

knife pricks,' gently pressing the point of the knife against the child's finger."

"Further on, the child is led to first feel his own action, and then to contemplate the action itself. Thus to teach the child to do all you say, request him who is to take food 'Open your mouth,' or when he is to be washed, "close your eyes.'

In order to direct his attention to the effect of food upon the nerves of taste and upon the relation between the food and the body, say, "How good that tastes!" In order to direct his attention to the smell of flowers, imitate the noise of snuffing and say, "How good that smells! Would you like to smell it?" etc. etc.

"Thus the natural method of educating the young child, is to cautiously follow in all directions the slowly developing, all-sided life of the child; to strengthen, and thus to arouse to ever greater activity the still more all-sided life within, and develop this.

"*Standing* represents the use of the body and limbs in their most complete totality; it is the finding of the centre of gravity of the body." * * * The child should stand when he is strong enough to keep his balance freely and independently; he should walk when, freely moving forward, he can keep his balance. He should not stand before he can sit erect; nor walk before he can creep, rise freely, maintain his balance, and proceed by

his own effort. When the child feels strength in his own feet, he rejoices intensely over it and for his own pleasure, repeats the new act * * * he is attracted by a bright, round pebble, by the gayly colored bit of paper * * and he tries to get hold of these with the help of the newly acquired use of his limbs * * *.

Looks the child that can scarcely keep himself erect, and that can walk only with greatest care—he sees a twig, a bit of straw; painfully he secures it, and like the young bird, carries it to his nest, as it were * * See him again, as he laboriously gathers bright pebbles as building stones. And is he wrong? Does not the child, in truth, collect material for his future life building? * *

If the building is to be sound, all the material must be known, not only by its name, but also by its qualities and uses; and that the child desires this, is shown in his child-like, quiet, busy activity. We call it childish, because we do not understand it, because we have not eyes to see, nor ears to hear, and, still less, *feeling to feel with the child*; we are dull, therefore the child's life seems dull to us. We do not know its meaning; how then, can we interpret it for the child? The child loves all things that enter his small horizon and extend his little world. To him the least thing is a new discovery. * * * Therefore the child would know himself, why he loves this thing; he would know its properties, its innermost

nature, that he may learn to understand *himself* in his attachment. For this reason the child examines the object on all sides; for this reason he tears and breaks it; for this reason he puts it in his mouth and bites it. We reprove the child for his naughtiness and foolishness, and yet he is wiser than we who reprove him."

"The child would know the inner nature of the thing. An innate instinct which, properly appreciated and guided, would seek to find God in all his works, urges him to this
* * *."

"It is true the broken object * * is dumb; yet it reveals in its fragments at least either like or unlike parts * * * and this means an extension of knowledge. Do adults extend their knowledge in a different way? Is not the inside of a plant, pithy, woody or hollow? Is not its cross-section circular, triangular, square? Is not the fracture even or uneven, smooth or rough, impervious or porous? * * * Are not the fragments sharp or blunt edged? Is it not brittle, or does it not rather yeild to the blows without breaking?"

All this *the child does* in order that from the diversity of outer manifestations of the object, its inner nature and its relation to him may become revealed, that he may know the cause of his liking, his fondness for the object. And do we adults who seek knowledge proceed differently?

* Unfortunately, our conceit induces us to lose sight of this natural and divine starting-point of all human development; we stand perplexed, having lost the beginning and end, and therefore the right direction. Having denied *God* and *nature*, we seek council from *human* knowledge and wit. * *

* And so it is that *we* do not recognize the significance of the child's activities. *His* life accords with the destiny and mission of mankind, but *we* know it not."

* Who then can analyze the joys which in this period are so rich?"

* Play and speech constitute the elements in which the child lives. Therefore, the child at this stage imparts to each thing the faculties of life, feeling and speech. Of *everything* he imagines that it can hear. Because the child himself begins to represent his inner being outwardly, he imputes the same activity to all about him, to the pebble, and chip of wood, to the plant, the flower, and the animal."

It is because of this feeling of kinship with nature, that Froebel urges that from *this* stage the love for nature forms be fostered in the child.

As to play, Froebel writes: "Play is the purest, most spiritual activity of man at this stage, and, at the same time, typical of human life as a whole—of the inner hidden natural life in man and all things. It gives, therefore, joy, freedom, contentment, inner

and outer rest, peace with all the world. It holds the source of all that is good. A child that plays thoroughly, with self-active determination, perseveringly until physical fatigue forbids, will surely be a thorough, determined man, capable of self-sacrifice or the promotion of the welfare of himself and others. Is not the most beautiful expression of child-life at this time, a playing child?—a child wholly absorbed in his play?—a child who has fallen asleep while so absorbed?”

“As already indicated, play at this time is not trivial, it is highly serious and of deep significance. * * * To the calm, keen vision of one who truly knows human nature, the spontaneous play of the child discloses *the future inner life of the man.*”

“Rich indeed is the life of the child ripening into boyhood, but we see it not. Real is his life, but we feel it not!” But we have only to watch the children in their play to discover the educational significance of all that they do.

Froebel continues: “See, a child has found a pebble. In order to determine by experiment its properties, he has rubbed it on a board near by, and has discovered its property of imparting color. It is a fragment of, perhaps, lime, clay, red-stone or chalk.”

“See how he delights in the newly-discovered property, and how busily he makes use of

it! Soon the whole surface of the board is changed."

"At first the boy took delight in the new property—now red, or white, or black or brown—but soon he began to find pleasure in the winding, straight, curved, and other forms that appear. * * * Now the head becomes a circle, and now the circular line represents the head, the elliptical curve connecting with it represents the body; arms and legs appear as straight or broken lines, and these again represent arms and legs: the fingers he sees as straight lines meeting in a common point, and lines so connected are, for the busy child, again hands and fingers; the eyes he sees as dots, and these again represent eyes; and thus a new world opens within and without. *For man tries to represent or do, what he begins to understand.*

* * * * Not only can the child represent the outer world in reduced measure, and thus comprehend it more easily with his eyes, not only can he reproduce outwardly what lives in his mind as a reminiscence or new association, but the knowledge of a wholly new invisible world, the world of forces, has its tenderest rootlets right here."

The ball that is rolling or has been rolled, the stone that has been thrown and falls, the water that was dammed and conducted into many branching ditches—all these have taught the child that the effect of a force, in its indi-

vidual manifestations, is {always in the direction of a line."

" Thus the representation of objects by lines soon leads the child to the perception and representation of the direction in which a force acts. ' Here flows a brook,' and, saying thus, the child makes a mark indicating the course of a brook. ' Here grows another branch, and here still another,' and as he speaks he draws forth from the tree, as it were, the lines indicating branches."

Watch the child now as he " traces a table by passing its fingers along its edges and outlines, as far as he can reach them. Thus the child sketches *the object*, on the object *itself*, as it were. This is the first, and, for the child, the safest step by which he first becomes aware of the outline and forms of objects."

" It is not only conducive but necessary to the development and strengthening of the child's power and skill that teachers should * * * connect the child's action with suitable language, *e.g.*, " Now I draw a table, a mirror; now I draw the diagonal of a slate upon the board."

" This enhances the inner and the outer power, increases knowledge, awakens the judgment and reflection, * * * and which *in a natural way*, cannot be aroused too soon." For the word and the drawing are always mutually explanatory and complementary; for neither one is, by itself, exhaustive and sufficient with

reference to the subject represented. The drawing properly stands between the *word* and the *thing*, shares certain qualities with each of them, and is, therefore, so valuable in the development of the child * * *." " * * * The faculty of drawing is as much innate in the child, as is the faculty of speech, and demands its development and cultivation as imperatively as the latter ; experience shows this clearly in the child's love for drawing, in the child's instinctive desire for drawing."

" The representation of objects by and in drawing induces and implies clear perception, and this soon leads the child to the ready recognition of the constantly repeated association of certain numbers of similar objects, e.g., two eyes and two arms, five fingers and five toes, the six legs of the beetle and of the fly. Thus the drawing of the object leads to the discovery of number. The repeated return of one and the same object leads to counting. The fixed distinctive sum of objects similar in certain respects constitutes the number of these objects. Thus by a new discovery, by the development and cultivation of the number-faculty in the child, his sphere of knowledge, his world, is again extended * * *."

" * * * At no time should numerals be given the child as empty, unmeaning sounds and be thus repeated by him. * * * For a long mite the child should never say the numerals, which, in themselves, *are* empty and meaningless to

him, without the aid of objects which *actually* counts."

It is thus step by step that Froebel brings us to a realization of the importance of understanding *the child*. He urges us " * * * not to harshly repel him ; show no impatience about his ever-recurring questions. Every harshly repelling word crushes a bud or shoot of his tree of life. Do not, however, tell him in words much more than he could find *himself* without your words. For it is, of course, easier to hear the answer from another, perhaps to only half hear and understand it, than to seek to uncover it himself. To have found one-fourth of the answer by his own efforts is of more value and importance to the child than it is to hear half, and half understand it in the words of another ; for this causes, mental indolence * * * ." " * * * In a few words he (Froebel) sum up his rule of conduct. "To lead children early to think, this I consider the first and foremost object of child-training."

How keenly we "grown-up's" feel the reproach in Froebel's words. * * * With all our knowledge, we are empty for our children * * * we do not feel the meaning of what we say, for our speech is made up of memorized ideas, based neither on perception nor on productive effort * * * our speech is like the book out of which we have learned, it, at third or fourth hand. * * * For this reason, and only for this, our inward and outer life, as well as the life of

our children, is so poor, because our speech is not born from a life, rich inwardly and outwardly in *seeing* and *doing*, because our word, our speech is not based on the perception of the thing it designates. * * * What we no longer possess—the all-quickening, creative power of child-life—let it again be translated from their life into ours * * It is not possible to gain from any thing, higher joys, higher enjoyment, than we do from the guidance of our children, from living with our children.'

By "living with our children" is meant, entering fully into their simple ways of seeing things and sayings, of feeling and thinking, of willing and doing; it means placing at *their* service our wider knowledge, our greater strength, patiently helping them, guarding and guiding them in their life, in its spontaneous search for light and love; it means joining them in their simple truthfulness, their childish faith in man, and leading them on the basis of this, to a higher and mightier faith in the immutable laws of nature and of God; it means being true with them so that they may reach higher truth; it means loving with them what they love, so that with our help they may learn to love the highest good."

"*Living with our children* implies on our part sympathy with childhood, adaptability to children, and knowledge and appreciation of child-nature; it implies genuine interest in all that interests them, to rejoice and grieve

with them in the measure of *their* joy and grief, not merely in the measure of *our* appreciation of loss or gain, of substance or shadow; it implies seeing, ourselves, with the eyes of a child; hearing, ourselves, with the ears of a child, judging, ourselves, with the keen intuition of a child."

While Froebel's philosophy is intended for *all*, perhaps his greatest message is to those who would undertake the sacred task of training and educating children.

He reminds us that "God neither engrafts nor inoculates. He *develops* the most trivial and imperfect things in continuously ascending series, and in accordance with eternal, *self-grounded* and *self-developing* laws." * * Hence * * our duty is to * * "bring even more *out* of man, rather than to put more *into* him * * therefore it is that the essential business of the school is not so much to teach and to communicate a variety and multiplicity of things (isolated facts and rules), as it is to give prominence to the ever-living unity that is in all things."

I question whether even now I have placed before you an adequate selection of the essential ideals of the noble educational philosophy of Frederick Froebel. At best I have only given you a few facts upon which he based what is so widely called "kindergarten." If you do not plainly discern its underlying principle, that of "*inner-connection*," complete

unity and perfect harmony which should prevail to make life seem to the child a perfect whole (not disjointed parts), as it seeks to adjust itself to the world about it, to nature and more especially *to God*, the fault is entirely mine own.

Let me urge in closing the thought, that since each generation is the trustee of civilisation, each generation is, then, responsible to posterity for the protection and enrichment of her responsibilities. If a chain is not stronger than its weakest link, neither is it possible for a nation to be superior to her citizens. Herein then, is the importance to any country to see that her children are educated according to inherent possibilities.

The burden of the responsibility to accomplish this, rests more especially upon *primary* teachers.

You must, then, frame your educational ideals, that you may have a definite object to accomplish ; then, by a course of systematic study and lectures, make yourselves fit for your task. You cannot do better than to follow the wisdom of the West, by studying *the child*, and adopting your educational method to meet his needs.

But whatever you undertake, whether as individuals or as an organisation, you cannot expect others to take the initiative, and you must stand or fall of your own strength. But whatever reasonable demands you may make for

assistance, you will find many to help; and I cheerfully predict for your movement, not only the co-operation of all who are engaged in educational work in India, but more especially the sympathy and help of the Director of Public Instruction.

LAKSHMI MEMORIAL
ARYA PATHASALA,

39, Tambu Chetty Street, Madras.

L. ANANTAIYAR, *Manager.*

C. DORASWAMIAH, *Asst. Manager.*

THE ARYA PATHASALA

was founded on Wednesday, the 2nd April, 1902, in loving memory of Lakshmi Amma, born at Kumbhakonam, on தாது வருஷம் ஐப்பசி மாதம் 27-ஆம் தேதி Died at Madras on விகாரி (வரு) மாதம் கிருஷ்ணபக்ஷம் துவாதசி, as the wife of T. A. Swaminatha Aiyar, leaving an only daughter by name தர்மஸம்வர்த்தனி.

Objects of the Institution.

To provide moral and religious education combined with secular instruction to the rising generation ; to infuse in them a love and regard for Aryan religion and ideals of life. This institution is worked by the **Hindu Educational Mission**, particulars of which can be obtained from Mr. P. S. Ramaswami Aiyar, the Secretary, or from Mrs. N. A. Courtright, Theosophical Headquarters, Adyar, Madras.

The Curriculum

is arranged to suit the Madras Educational Rules and the Institution has been recognized as a Grant-in-aid School, Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Drawing, Music, Needlework, &c., are some of the subjects taught to the children. The institution is open both to Boys and Girls. Instruction is given in Tamil, Telugu and English.

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Poor Children are admitted free.

Voluntary contributions to aid the School will be thankfully received and acknowledged ; as also presents of books, dolls, and sundries for prizes to the pupils.

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