

FROBETS

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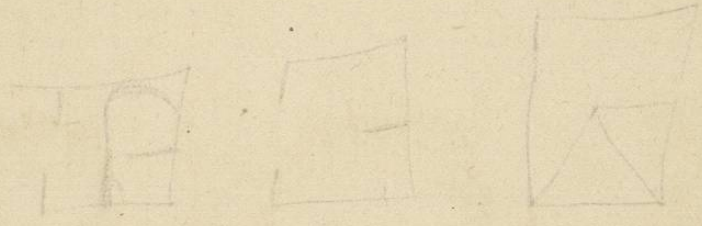
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF FROEBEL.



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AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
FRIEDRICH FROEBEL

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY

EMILIE MICHAELIS,

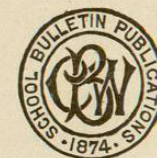
Head Mistress of the Croydon Kindergarten and Preparatory School,

AND

H. KEATLEY MOORE, Mus.Bac., B.A.,

*Examiner in Music to the Froebel Society, and Vice-Chairman of the Croydon
Kindergarten Company.*

“Come, let us live for our children.”



SYRACUSE, N. Y.:

C. W. BARDEEN, PUBLISHER.

1889.

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German Books on Pedagogy.

1. *Comenius. Grosse Unterrichtslehre.* Mit einer Einleitung, "J. Comenius, sein Leben und Werken," von LINDNER. Price \$1.50.
2. *Helvetius. Von Menschen, seinen Geisteskräften und seiner Erziehung.* Mit einer Einleitung, "Cl. Adr. Helvetius, 1715-1771. Ein Zeit- und Lebensbild," von LINDNER. 12mo, pp. 339. Price \$1.50.
3. *Pestalozzi. Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt.* Mit einer Einleitung, "J. H. Pestalozzi's Leben, Werke, und Grundsätze," von RIEDEL. Price \$1.25.
4. *Niemeyer. Grundsätze die Erziehung und des Unterrichtes.* Mit einer Einleitung "Aug. Herm. Niemeyer, sein Leben und Werken," von LINDNER. 2 vols. Price \$3.00.
5. *Diesterweg. Rhenische Blätter.* Mit einer Einleitung, "F. A. W. Diesterweg," von JESSEN. Price \$1.25.
6. *Jacotot. Universal Unterricht.* Mit einer "Darstellung des Lebens und der Lehre Jacotot's," von GOERING. 12mo, pp. 364. Price \$3.75.
7. *Fröbel. Pädagogische Schriften.* Herausgegeben von SEIDEL. 3 vols. Price \$7.00.
8. *Fichte. Pädagogisch Schriften und Ideen.* Mit "biographischer Einleitung und gedrängter Darstellung von Fichte's Pädagogik," von KEFERSTEIN. Price \$2.00.
9. *Martin Luther. Pädagogische Schrifte.* Mit Einleitung von SCHUMANN. Price \$1.50.
10. *Herder als Pädagog.* Von MORRES. Price 75 cts.
11. *Geschichte der Pädagogik, in Biographen, Uebersichten, und Proben aus pädagogischen Hauptwerken.* Von NIEDERGESAESS. Price \$2.50.
11. *Lexikon der Pädagogik.* Von SANDER. Price \$3.50.

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PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

It will be long before we have a biography of Froebel to compare with DeGuimp's *Pestalozzi*, of which an English translation has just appeared. Meantime we must content ourselves with two long autobiographical letters contained in this volume, which, though incomplete, have yet the peculiar charm that comes from the candid record of genuine impressions.

The first of these letters, that to the Duke of Meiningen, has already appeared in English, in a translation by Miss Lucy Wheelock for Barnard's *American Journal of Education*, since reprinted in pp. 21-48 of his *Kindergarten and Child Culture*, (see p. 146), and in a small volume under the title *Autobiography of Froebel* (see p. 146). While a faithful attempt to reproduce the original, this translation struggled in vain to transform Froebel's rugged and sometimes seemingly incoherent sentences into adequate and attractive English, so that the long letter has proved to most English readers formidable and repellent. But in the original it is one of the most charming productions in literature, candid and confidential in tone, and detailing those inner gropings for ideas that became convictions which only an autobiography can reveal. These qualities are so admirably preserved in the translation by Miss Emily Michaelis and H. Keatley Moore that it seemed to leave nothing to be desired. They have not only given a faithful rendering, but they have impressed upon it the loving touch of faithful disciples. Accordingly I purchased from the English publishers the American rights to this translation; and have reproduced not only this

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letter, but that to the philosopher Krause, with Barop's "Critical Moments," and the "Chronological Abstract," all from duplicates of the English plates.

The rest of the volume appears for the first time. The Bibliography seemed desirable, and is confined to attainable books likely to be of value to American teachers. The Index is full, but not fuller than the fragmentary character of the material seemed to require. The Table of Contents will also serve to make reference easy to the principal events of Froebel's history.

In the lives of Pestalozzi and of Froebel many resemblances may be traced. Both were sons of clergymen. Both were half-orphans from their earliest recollections. Both were unhappy in childhood, were misunderstood, companionless, awkward, clumsy, ridiculed. Both were as boys thrown into the almost exclusive society of women, and both retained to the last strongly feminine characteristics. Both were throughout life lacking in executive ability; both were financially improvident. Both were dependent for what they did accomplish upon friends, and both had the power of inspiring and retaining friendships that were heroic, Pestalozzi's Krüsi corresponding with Froebel's Middendorf. Both became teachers only by accident, and after failure in other professions. Both saw repeated disaster in the schools they established, and both were to their last days pointed at as visionary theorists of unsound mind. Both failed to realize their ideas, but both planted their ideas so deeply in the minds of others that they took enduring root. Both lacked knowledge of men, but both knew and loved children, and were happiest when personally and alone they had children under their charge. Both delighted in nature, and found in solitary contemplation of flowers and woods and mountains relief from the disappointments they encountered among their fellows.

But there were contrasts too. Pestalozzi had no family ties, while Froebel maintained to the last the closest relations with several brothers and their households. Pestalozzi married at twenty-three a woman older than himself, on whom he thereafter relied in all his troubles. Froebel deferred his marriage till thirty-six and then seems to have regarded his wife more as an advantage to his school than as a help-meet to himself.

Pestalozzi was diffident, and in dress and manner careless to the point of slovenliness; Froebel was extravagant in his self-confidence, and at times almost a dandy in attire. Pestalozzi was always honest and candid, while Froebel was as a boy untruthful. Pestalozzi was touchingly humble, and eager to ascribe the practical failure of his theories to his personal inefficiency; Froebel never acknowledged himself in the wrong, but always attributed failure to external causes. On the other hand, while Froebel was equable in temperment, Pestalozzi was moody and impressionable, flying from extreme gaiety to extreme dejection, slamming the door if displeased with a lesson a teacher was giving, but coming back to apologize if he met a child who smiled upon him. Under Rousseau's influence Pestalozzi was inclined to skepticism, and limited religious teaching in school to the reading of the gospels, and the practice of Christianity; Froebel was deeply pious, and made it fundamental that education should be founded plainly and avowedly upon religion.

Intellectually the contrast is even stronger. While Froebel had a university education, Pestalozzi was an eminently ignorant man; his penmanship was almost illegible, he could not do simple sums in multiplication, he could not sing, he could not draw, he wore out all his handkerchiefs gathering pebbles and then never looked at them afterward. Froebel was not only a reader but a scientific reader, always seeking first to find out what

others had discovered that he might begin where they left off; Pestalozzi boasted that he had not read a book in forty years. Naturally, therefore, Pestalozzi was always an experimenter, profiting by his failures but always failing in his first attempts, and hitting upon his most characteristic principles by accident; while Froebel was a theorist, elaborating his ideas mentally before putting them in practice, and never satisfied till he had properly located them in his general scheme of philosophy.

And yet, curiously enough, it is Pestalozzi who was the author. His "Leonard and Gertrude" was read by every cottage fireside, while Froebel's writings were intelligible only to his disciples. Pestalozzi had an exuberant imagination and delightful directness and simplicity of expression; Froebel's style was labored and obscure, and his doctrines may be better known through the "Child and Child Nature" of the Baroness Marenholz von Buelow than through his own "Education of Man."

The account of Froebel's life given in this volume is supplemented somewhat by the "Reminiscences" of this same Baroness, who became acquainted with him in 1849, and was thereafter his most enthusiastic and successful apostle. Till some adequate biography appears, that volume and this must be relied upon for information of the man who shares equally with Pestalozzi the honor of educational reform in this century.

C. W. BARDEEN.

Syracuse, June 10, 1889.

COMMENTS UPON FROEBEL AND HIS WORK.

Und als er so, wie Wichard Lange richtig sagt, der Apostel des weiblichen Geschlechts geworden war, starb er, der geniale, unermüdlich thätige, von Liebe getragene Mann.—SCHMIDT, *Geschichte der Pädagogik*, Cöthen, 1862, iv. 282.

En résumé, Rousseau aurait pu être déconcerté par les inventions pratiques, un peu subtiles parfois, de l'ingénieux Froebel. Il eût souri, comme tout le monde, des artifices par lesquels il obligeait l'enfant à se faire acteur au milieu de ses petits camarades, à imiter tour à tour le soldat qui monte la garde, le cordonnier qui travaille, le cheval qui piétine, l'homme fatigué qui se repose. Mais, sur les principes, il se serait mis aisément d'accord avec l'auteur de *l'Éducation de l'homme*, avec un penseur à l'âme tendre et noble, qui remplaçait les livres par les choses, qui à une instruction pédantesque substituait l'éducation intérieure, qui aux connaissances positives préférait la chaleur du sentiment, la vie intime et profonde de l'âme, qui respectait la liberté et la spontanéité de l'enfant, qui enfin s'efforçait d'écarter de lui les mauvaises influences et de faire à son innocence un milieu digne d'elle—COMPAYRÉ'S *Histoire Critique des Doctrines de l'Éducation en France depuis le XVI^{me} Siècle*, Paris, 1879, ii. 125.

We might say that his effort in pedagogy consists chiefly in organizing into a system the sense intuitions which Pestalozzi proposed to the child somewhat at random and without direct plan.—COMPAYRÉ'S *History of Pedagogy*, Payne's translation, Boston, 1886, p. 449.

Er war gleich Pestalozzi von den höchsten Ideen der Zeit getragen und suchte die Erziehung an diese Ideen anzuknüpfen. So lange die Mutter nicht nach den Gesetzen der Natur ihr Kind erzieht und bildet und dafür nicht ihr Leben einsetzt, so lange—davon geht er aus—sind alle Reformen der Schule auf Sand gebaut. Trotzdem verlegt er einen Theil der mütterlichen Aufgabe in den Kindergarten, in welchem er die Kinder vor ihre Schulpflichtigkeit vereinigt wissen will, (1) um auf die häusliche Erziehung ergänzend und verbessernd einzuwirken, (2) um das Kind aus dem Einzelleben heraus Zum Verkehr mit seinesgleichen zu führen, und (3) um dem weiblichen Geschlechte Gelegenheit zu geben, sich auf seinen erzieherischen Beruf vorzubereiten.—BÖHM'S *Kurzgefasste Geschichte der Pädagogik*, Nürnberg, 1880, p. 134.

Le jardin d'enfants est évidemment en opposition avec l'idée fondamentale de Pestalozzi; car celui-ci avait confié entièrement à la mère et au foyer domestique la tâche que Froebel remet, en grande partie, aux jardins d'enfants et à sa directrice. A l'égard des rapports de l'éducation domestique, telle qu'elle est à l'heure qu'il est, on doit reconnaître que Froebel avait un coup-d'oeil plus juste que Pestalozzi.—*Histoire d'Éducation*, FREDERICK DITTES, Redolfi's French translation, Paris, 1880, p. 258.

While others have taken to the work of education their own pre-conceived notions of what that work should be, Froebel stands consistently alone in seeking in the nature of the child the laws of educational action—in ascertaining from the child himself how we are to educate him.—JOSEPH PAYNE, *Lectures on the Science and Art of Education*, Syracuse, 1885, p. 254.

Years afterwards, the celebrated Jahn (the "Father Jahn" of the German gymnastics) told a Berlin student of a queer fellow he had met, who made all sorts of wonderful things from stones and cobwebs. This queer fel-

low was Froebel; and the habit of making out general truths from the observation of nature, especially from plants and trees, dated from the solitary rambles in the Forest.

As the cultivator creates nothing in the trees and plants, so the educator creates nothing in the children,—he merely superintends the development of inborn faculties. So far Froebel agrees with Pestalozzi; but in one respect he was beyond him, and has thus become, according to Michelet, the greatest of educational reformers. Pestalozzi said that the faculties were developed by exercise. Froebel added that the function of education was to develop the faculties by arousing *voluntary activity*. Action proceeding from inner impulse (*Selbstthätigkeit*) was the one thing needful, and here Froebel as usual refers to God: "God's every thought is a work, a deed." As God is the Creator, so must man be a creator also. Living acting, conceiving,—these must form a triple cord within every child of man, though the sound now of this string, now of that may preponderate, and then again of two together.

Pestalozzi held that the child belonged to the family; Fichte on the other hand, claimed it for society and the State. Froebel, whose mind, like that of Frederick Maurice, delighted in harmonizing apparent contradictions, and who taught that "all progress lay through opposites to their reconciliations," maintained that the child belonged both to the family and to society, and he would therefore have children spend some hours of the day in a common life and in well-organized common employments. These assemblies of children he would not call schools, for the children in them ought not to be old enough for schooling. So he invented the term *Kindergarten*, garden of children, and called the superintendents "children's gardeners."—R. H. QUICK, in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, xix edition.