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A comparison of the "mother school" of Comenius with the "kindergarten" of Froebel

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A COMPARISON OF THE "MOTHER SCHOOL" OF COMENIUS WITH THE "KINDERGARTEN" OF FROEBEL.

Submitted by

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Summary

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It is the purpose of this thesis to compare "Mother School" of John Amos Comenius, who lived during the first half of the seventeenth century and was the first to show a real interest in the development of the early life of the child, with the "Kindergarten" of Friedrich Froebel, who lived during the first half of the nineteenth century and established the first real institution for the development of the early life of the child. No attempt will be made to show that the one influenced the other, although references can be found which assert that Froebel had been introduced to the work of Comenius. Monroe tells us that Froebel's attention was called to the writings of Comenius early in his educational career by Professors Krause, Herder, and others.¹ Bowen says, "Froebel made Krause's personal acquaintance at Gottingen in 1828, and was by him introduced to the works of Comenius."² Froebel, however, makes no reference to Comenius or credits him in any way with having motivated or influenced his educational theory or practice. Although the teachings of the two educators show some significant differences, nevertheless, in many important particulars they are similar. Froebel, who devoted more time to this particular field of education, was able to work out a more detailed practice than

¹ Monroe, Will S. Comenius and the Beginnings of Educational Reform, New York, 1900, p. 158.
In this connection the influence of the early life of each of the bishops, in their diocesan work will be considered. Their work, embracing in some cases the entire lifetime of one of the bishops, will include the study of his work, and the activities and concerns which have developed as accommodation with time will be considered.
I. The Life of John Amos Comenius

A. Early Life and Education

John Amos Comenius (Komensky) was born on March 28, 1592 at Nivnitz, a village of Moravia. His father and mother, Martin and Anna, had settled here some years previous with other followers of John Hus. They belonged to that sect of Reformed Christians known as the Bohemian or Moravian Brethren which was marked by its simplicity of faith, sincere personal piety, and brotherliness. Born within the sovereignty of Austria Comenius was called an Austro-Slav, and his language was that of Bohemian or Czech. Shortly after his birth the family moved to Ungarisch-Brod. That his parents died when he was quite young cannot be questioned for he himself begins one of his sentences in the preface to the Prodromus by saying, "Losing both my parents while I was yet a child." 1 Just when they died is a disputed point. According to Keatinge his father died in 1602 and his mother a couple of years later, 2 while according to Monroe the death of the father was 1604 and the mother survived the father less than a year. 3 In either case it is evident that Comenius was deprived of his parents early in life and handed over to guardians.

His formal education began in the elementary people's

1 Quick, Robert H. Essays on Educational Reformers, New York, 1897, p. 120.
school of Strassnick where he was instructed in reading, writing, knowledge of the Catechism, and the smallest beginnings of arithmetic. Not until he was sixteen years of age did he attend the Latin school at Prerau where he went to prepare for the ministry among the Moravian Brethren.

Whether this late admittance to the Latin school was due to slowness of growth, spoken of by Laurie, or neglect of his guardians, which he himself mentions, the final result was the same. It gave him an opportunity to catch something of the earnest spirit of the Brethren with whom he lived, a spirit of "simplicity, zeal, piety, self-sacrifice, humility" which he reflected all through his life. It also made it possible for him to see and resent the defects in the educational system which less mature students accepted without question.

On March 30, 1611, he entered the College of Herborn in Nassau, Germany, to pursue his theological studies. No doubt one of the reasons for choosing this school was that John Henry Alsted, one of the most distinguished theological and philosophical professors of the day, taught there. Professor Alsted with his emphasis on the teaching of everything through the medium of what is more familiar, on the mapping out of all study in fixed periods, on the teaching of everything without severity, and on the reserving of corporal punishment for moral offences only greatly influenced the educational views of Comenius. In 1612 while still in

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1 Laurie, S. S. John Amos Comenius, Bishop of the Moravians, His Life and Educational Works. Syracuse, 1892, p. 27.
Herborn he became acquainted with the writings of Ratke. Comenius claims that it was these writings which played the largest part in making him an educational reformer. He left Herborn in the spring of 1613.

During the year of 1613 he lived for a time at Amsterdam and studied at Heidelberg where he matriculated as a student of philosophy and theology on June 13. The only thing we know of his life here is that he purchased a manuscript of Copernicus. At the end of the year he found himself out of funds and had to return to Prague on foot.

Still too young for the ministry Comenius was made Rector of the Moravian school at Prerau. He attempted at once to introduce new methods of instruction and discipline. For the benefit of his own pupils he wrote a simplified Latin grammar on the line of Ratke’s method which was afterwards published at Prague in 1616. At Zerwick on April 29, 1616, he was ordained to the pastorate but was not appointed to a special charge until 1618. During the intervening two years he continued to teach at Prerau. In 1618 he was called to the pastorate at Fulneck. In addition to his duties as pastor he had the superintendence of a school which had been recently erected. This part of his task led him to consider more seriously the subject of instruction. During his three years here he enjoyed the one tranquil, settled period of his life.

The Thirty Year’s War ended this tranquility. In 1621 Fulneck was sacked by the Spaniards, and the property of Comenius, including his library and manuscripts, was destroyed.
He, together with other Moravian pastors, was forced to leave Fulneck and to reside under the protection of Karl von Zerotin, a wealthy Moravian. In 1622 he lost his wife and only child. The imperial mandate of 1624 which banished the evangelical clergy from the country compelled Comenius and his fellow-pastors to leave the protection of Zerotin. For a time they secreted themselves on the Bohemian mountains in the citadel of Baron Sadowsky near Slaupna. From this hiding place Comenius often secretly visited his community to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments. While in this retreat he again directed his attention to the science of teaching. He read a treatise by Elias Bodinus, recently imported from Germany, which fired his imagination and awakened in him a desire to produce a like work. He came to the conclusion that the future betterment of society lay in education. He longed to build up learning, virtue, and piety through the institution of schools, good books, and a simple method. In 1627 while he was engaged in thinking this through, the Austrian government, acting under the instigation of the Jesuits, put an end to the protection of the evangelical pastors by nobles, asked them to renounce their faith or leave the country, and began active persecution.

In January, 1628, Comenius and the rest of the Brethren were forced to leave their native land for Poland. On the mountain frontier which separates Moravia from Silesia "the band of exiles knelt, and Comenius offered up an impassioned prayer for his beloved Moravia and Bohemia. This was his
last and look on his devoted country. He never afterward beheld the land of his fathers, but for more than half a century he lived an exile in foreign regions. Well might he, in his old age, exclaim: 'My whole life was merely the visit of a guest; I had no fatherland.'

B. Career as an Educational Reformer.

It was in the Polish town of Lissa near the Silesian border that Comenius found temporary rest from his wanderings. Here he was employed to reorganize the old established Moravian Gymnasium. Once again he set about reconstructing the traditional methods and began in earnest to work on his Didactica Magna which was to express his educational principles. This work was not published at the time, but it did lay a foundation for his text-books. The first of these, which it took him three years to produce, was called the Janua, a simplified Latin text-book. This work, published in 1631 and translated into some twelve or more languages, made him and the little Polish town of Lissa famous. Two years later appeared his Vestibulum, an easy introduction to the Janua, and the School of Infancy, a book designed to help mothers in the education of the child during the earliest years of life. The wide publication of his works awakened an interest in educational reform in England, Germany, France, and Sweden.

In 1632 at a synod of the Moravian Brethren at Lissa

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1 Monroe, Will S. op. cit., p. 46.
Comenius was elected Bishop of the scattered Brethren. His services could not be rendered in person but had to be carried on through correspondence and through the writing of treatises. It was his relations to the Moravian Church and his desire to complete some unfinished and important educational writings that caused him to refuse an invitation in 1638 to reconstruct the school system of Sweden.

The dominant interest of Comenius was in his scheme of universal knowledge. His Pansophiaeae Prodromus had been published and dispersed throughout various countries. People felt that the work contemplated was so big that one person could never accomplish all and advised that a college of learned men should be instituted to carry it into effect. Comenius himself realized the bigness of the task and the amount of time, talent, and expense required to bring the idea to fruition. "The vastness of the labors I contemplate," he wrote to a Polish nobleman, "demands that I should have a wealthy patron, whether we look at their extent, or at the necessity of securing assistants, or at the expenses generally."¹ In England Samuel Hartlib not only interested the public in this vast dream of Comenius but Parliament as well. He labored earnestly for the establishment of a college in England and when his dream seemed about to be realized he sent for Comenius. "As my friends consented to my departure," writes Comenius, "I proceeded to London, and arrived there on the autumnal equinox (Sept. 22)

¹ Quick, Robert H. op. cit., p. 123.
in the year 1641, and then learned that I had been called thither by an order of the Parliament. But, in consequence of the King having gone to Scotland, the Parliament had been dismissed for three months, and, consequently, I had to winter in London.¹ Being in close touch with those who were interested in his ideals and educational schemes was a happy experience for Comenius. But, because the country was on the eve of rebellion, the educational reform could not go forward and Comenius felt it was useless to remain. While in London, it is said, his attention was directed to the presidency of Harvard.

At this time he was invited to Sweden by Ludovic de Geer, a Dutch merchant living at Nordkoping, who offered him a home and means for carrying out his plans. In August 1642 Comenius left London for Sweden where he hoped to work out his pansophic ideal. De Geer proved to be less interested in universal research and the founding of a pansophic college than in "better school-books for the children, rational methods of teaching for the teachers, and some intelligent grading of the schools."² A conference at Stockholm with the Swedish leaders, Lord Axel Oxenstiern and Dr. John Skyte, completely shattered Comenius' hope of realizing his pansophic ideal in Sweden. His own pecuniary needs and the needs of the Brethren led him to accept, however, the task of reforming the teaching and of preparing suitable text-books for the Swedish schools in spite of the earnest entreaties of his

¹ Monroe, Will S. op. cit., p. 53.
² Ibid., p. 57.
friends that he not forsake his pansophic principles. Supported by de Geer he lived in Elbing where he spent six years in troublesome and vexatious toil. In 1646 at the end of four years labour he visited Sweden again---this time with his manuscripts. His work was approved, but before being published more years of hard labour were required. In 1648 he was elected senior bishop of the Moravian Brethren and removed to Lissa where he not only carried on his work with the widely dispersed Brethren but completed the above treatises which he sent to de Geer as rapidly as they were finished. He persevered in this task not so much for the pay he received, which was very small, but in the hope that Sweden would help in removing the ban which kept the Moravian Brethren from their native land.

In 1650 he was released temporarily from his episcopal duties to establish a school at Saros-Patok in Hungary. Here he drew up a sketch of a seven-grade school and published it under the title Plan of a Pansophic School. This "Plan" became an educational model for many lands. Here he introduced pictures as aids in teaching and wrote his most celebrated book, Orbis Pictus, the first picture-book for children. It was not published, however, until 1657.

In 1654 he returned to Lissa to resume his ecclesiastical labors but his stay was short lived. Poland was invaded by the Swedes. Comenius was in sympathy with the invaders and wrote a congratulatory address to the Swedish King. In the treaty of peace between the two countries Lissa, together
with other towns, was turned over to Sweden. However, as soon as the Swedish King withdrew, Poland again took up arms and plundered the above towns. The property of Comenius was marked for special violence because of his sympathy with Sweden. Once again Comenius lost the labours of years, his precious manuscripts, and was forced to seek a safer asylum. He escaped to Silesia where he found refuge for a time with a nobleman. Worn and half sick he wandered about Germany until he became prostrated with fever at Hamburg.

C. Closing years.

Lawrence de Geer, son of Ludovic, heard of the plight of Comenius, for whom he had a real affection and in whose educational schemes he had a keen interest, and invited him to join him in Amsterdam. At this time Comenius was sixty-three years of age. Having endured many hardships and having several times lost all of his possessions he needed in his closing years such a person as Lawrence de Geer to provide for his needs and to support him in his yet unrealized educational schemes. At this time he revised and completed the issue of his collected Didactic works. They were published in 1657 under the title, The Complete Didactic Works of J. A. Comenius.

In addition to these educational tasks the last years of Comenius' life were spent in administering the affairs of the resurrected Moravian church. He had charge of apportioning to the scattered Brethren money which was generously given by various countries interested in the restoration of
the Moravian churches.

At the age of seventy-six his last work, One Thing Needful, was published. In this he expresses the motives which actuated him in his work as an educational reformer.

"One of my chief employments," he writes, "has been the improvement of schools, which I undertook and continued for many years from the desire to deliver the youth in the schools from the labyrinth in which they are entangled. Some have held this business foreign to a theologian, as if Christ had not connected together and given to his beloved disciple Peter at the same time two commands, 'Feed my sheep' and 'Feed my lambs.' I thank Christ for inspiring me with such affection toward his lambs and for regulating my exertions in the form of educational works. I trust that when the winter of indifference has passed that my endeavors will bring forth some fruit." 1

It was in his eightieth year on November 15, 1671 that the earthly wanderings of Comenius finally ceased.

1 Ibid., pp. 75, 76.
II. Comenius' Conception of Early Childhood Education.

Comenius' interest in early childhood education was the natural culmination of his previous experiences. Although he had been deprived of both his parents early in life, he was old enough to have experienced the joy of their care and the value of their guidance. Looking back in later years he saw this early period as a kind of golden age—"a golden age of parental, educational opportunity." He refers in his School of Infancy to parents who were failing to utilize this opportunity and who were depending upon the schools of the day with their deadening methods to accomplish all. Comenius was a teacher; he saw within his own classes the fruits of such neglect. It is not surprising then that, in spite of his many duties, he took the time to think through and write in behalf of the education of early childhood.

A. Factors in His Philosophy of Education Which Form a Foundation for His Mother School.

Nature of Man. According to Comenius man lives a three-fold life—"a vegetative, an animal, and an intellectual or spiritual. The first is perfect in the womb, the second on earth, and the last in heaven. Because of this last characteristic Comenius considers man the most excellent and complete of living creatures; he says man is meant to be a "rational creature, the Lord of all creatures, a creature which is the image and the joy of its Creator."¹

¹ Keatinge, M. W. The Great Didactic of John Amos Comenius. London, 1896, p. 188.
Because man has been created in the image of God he is able to acquire the knowledge of all things. Unlike the prevalent belief of the time Comenius believes that man is not born wholly in sin but has the "seeds" of goodness (learning, virtue, and piety) within him. "The mind, therefore, of a man who enters this world is very justly compared to a seed or to a kernel in which the plant or tree really does exist, although its image cannot be seen."¹ His brain is like a wax tablet which is able to receive thousands of images and his sense organs are avenues by which he may become acquainted with everything in the universe. Comenius does not agree with Cicero that, if the seeds implanted within man were allowed to develop, nature herself would bring man to the life of the blest. Man is meant to be a rational creature, but he cannot attain this without real labor; "if man.............stands in need of instruction as to his bodily actions, so that he may be daily trained as to eating, drinking, running, speaking, seizing with the hand, and laboring; how, I pray, can those duties, higher and more remote from the senses, such as faith, virtue, wisdom, and knowledge, spontaneously come to any one? It is altogether impossible."²

Purpose of Education Since only the seeds of knowledge, virtue, and piety are implanted in man and

¹ Ibid., p. 194.
actual knowledge, virtue, and piety are acquired, instruction is necessary in order that man may be more than a wild beast. Religion determined for Comenius his conception and aim of education; for him the end of man lies beyond this life. His primary principle is that "the ultimate end of man is eternal happiness with God." While Comenius, like other educators of his time, stressed the life beyond, he differed from them in a more thorough-going belief in education as a social regenerating force. "For him education meant the completest possible preparation for life, here and here-after, not through languages, but through all the facts about the universe to which languages opened the doors." To attain his ultimate end he would endeavor to bring to maturity the seeds of learning, virtue, and piety implanted in man. In other words, his more specific aims in the attainment of his ultimate goal are—to help man to know all things, to be master of all things and of himself, and to refer everything to God; to state in still another way, he aims to produce men "who are wise in mind, prudent in action, and pious in spirit."3

Content and Method of Education. The content of education for the accomplishment of these goals Comenius considered to be the whole universe of knowledge; each child, rich or poor, high or low, boy or girl

3 Keatinge, M. W. op. cit., p. 223.
must become acquainted with all phases of learning. In his Great Didactic he tells us, "It is the principles, the causes, and the uses of all the most important things in existence that we wish all men to learn. . . . . . we must take strong and vigorous measures that no man, in his journey through life, may encounter anything so unknown to him that he cannot pass sound judgment upon it and turn it to its proper use without serious error."¹ To attain a goal as vast as this it was necessary to begin the educational process with the infant. Even in this early stage he did not limit education to one or two subjects but included all of life and knowledge which could be adapted to the child's stage of development. He would not cut the field of learning perpendicularly and have the individual master one subject or phase of learning at a time, he would cut the field horizontally giving the individual something of all phases of learning throughout the various stages of his development.

Comenius would have instruction begin in infancy and proceed "step by step in proportion to the development of the powers, following the course of nature."² Having no system of psychology on which to base his methods he resorted to analogies from nature. As soon as we begin to deal with his ideas on the organization of content we become involved in his theory of method. Comenius made the two inseparable. Since his organization of all knowledge was based upon his

¹ Ibid., p. 222.
belief that the universe in every phase of nature and in every activity of man is fundamentally the same and that therefore the seeds of knowledge, virtue, and piety are inherent in man making development possible, the interdependence of content and method was inevitable. The result of this close relationship between the two was an educational process with a life-like character that was unknown up to this time. Just as a seed needs only the right conditions to cause it to become a beautiful flower, so a child needs only wise culture to cause the seeds of knowledge, virtue, and piety to spring into life.

The way of nature, he says, moves smoothly; "learning should come to children as swimming to fish, flying to birds, running to animals. As Aristotle says, the desire of knowledge is implanted in man: and the mind grows as the body does---by taking proper nourishment, and not by being stretched on the rack." ¹ If the way of nature is followed, nothing will be taught except when it can be understood; nothing will be taught to which the natural bent of the intellect does not incline it; nothing will be taught until the mind has been duly prepared to receive it; everything will be taught through a developing rather than a pouring-in process; everything will be taught by proceeding from the general to the particular, the easy to the more difficult, the near to the remote, the known to the unknown; everything will be taught through the medium of the senses. His

¹ Quick, R. H. op. cit., p. 136.
emphasis upon the senses as an important avenue for teaching is an outstanding feature of the educational method of Comenius. "Education should proceed," he says, "in the following order: first, educate the senses, then the memory, then the intellect; last of all, the critical faculty. This is the order of Nature."¹

B. "The Mother School."

Our best source of information for Comenius' conception of the child and of the education of early childhood is his School of Infancy which was written as an aid to mothers in the education and development of children from birth to about six years of age. Regarding this book one American authority on Comenius writes:

"Great as are the reforms suggested in the Great Didactic, the Janua, and the Orbis Pictus, yet these are equalled if not surpassed by that incomparable pedagogical treatise, The School of Infancy, published as early as 1633. This is an essay on the education of youth during their first six years; and as a suggestive guide to mothers and teachers of little ones, few books have appeared in any language better calculated to inspire and assist those engaged in the high and holy mission of teaching little children."²

Conception of the Child. The spirit of this book and the attitude of Comenius toward little children is expressed in the following quotation from the title-page:

"Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of God." As indicated before

¹ Ibid., p. 138.
² Monroe, Will S. Comenius, the Evangelist of Modern Pedagogy, Boston, 1892, p. 5.
he did not abandon wholly the prevalent doctrine of original sin; he believed that there were "seeds" of goodness within and that the child should be regarded with a view to the purposes of the Divine mind.

"Whosoever," he says, "has within his house youth exercising themselves in these three departments (learning, virtue, and piety), possesses a Garden in which celestial planets are sown, watered, bloom, and flourish; a studio of the Holy Spirit, in which He elaborates and polishes those vessels of mercy, those instruments of glory, so that in them, as lively images of God, the rays of his eternal and infinite power, wisdom and bounty may shine more and more. How inexpressibly blessed are parents in such a paradise!"\(^1\)

A careful study of his School of Infancy reveals his belief in the following as characteristics of little children:

a. The mind is like wax upon which impressions can be easily made because it is soft; when it hardens these impressions are retained and others will be received only with great difficulty and violence.

b. The senses are the main guides of childhood; the mind is not yet capable of an abstracted contemplation of things.

c. Children are imitative. "It is necessary," he says, "that children should have presented before them a perpetual good example, since God has implanted in them a certain imitative principle, namely, a desire to imitate what they see others do."\(^2\)

d. Reason begins to unfold about the second year. When

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1 Monroe, W. S. Comenius' School of Infancy. Boston, 1896, p. 11.
2 Ibid., p. 56.
speaking of initiating the child into piety he says that it may be "begun in the second year, when reason, as a little lovely flower, begins to unfold itself and to distinguish things."\(^1\)

e. The ability to understand words and the love of melody and rhythm develop at the same time.

f. Children are naturally active. "Boys ever delight in being occupied in something."\(^2\) He goes so far as to say that inactivity is injurious both to the mind and the body; "too much sitting still or slowly walking about on the part of a child is not a good sign; to be always running or doing something is a sure sign of a sound body and vigorous intellect."\(^3\)

Place and Teacher. Comenius would have the education and development of little children from birth to about the age of six years take place in the home. He does not hold absolutely to that age-range but explains that "the proposed termination may either be made or anticipated by a half or even a whole year, according to the child's capacity and progress."\(^4\) In each home he would have a place provided where these young children might run about and play in safety with the mother as teacher. Young children would not be removed from their mothers and delivered

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 56.
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 44.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 46.
\(^4\) Ibid., p. 82.
to regular classroom teachers because "the infantile age requires more watchfulness and care than a teacher, having a number of children under him, is able to afford." The work of the school he believed was too difficult for a mind that was not yet "consolidated"; consolidation he said did not take place before the child was five or six years of age. In the atmosphere of the home he believed the young child would grow firm and strong. Resorting again to his analogy between man and nature he says, "The shoot which is taken to be planted out while too tender, grows feebly and slowly, whereas the firmer one grows strongly and quickly." Although Comenius considered the mother as the chief teacher of this age group, he did not fail to see that children of their own age are of great service in their development.

"When they play together, children of about the same age, and of equal progress and manners and habits, sharpen each other more effectually, since the one does not surpass the other in depth of invention; there is among them neither assumption of superiority of the one over the other, nor force, dread, or fear; but love, candor, free questionings and answers about everything." 3

The Purpose of Early Education. In the "Mother School" as in the rest of his educational scheme Comenius would have the child come to know God as one who is everywhere present and being everywhere present beholds

1 Ibid., p. 81.
2 Ibid., p. 81.
3 Ibid., p. 42.
us all; as One who bestows good gifts of food, drink, clothing, and all things upon those who obey Him; as One who punishes with death those who are stubborn and immoral; a God, therefore, who should be feared, obeyed, invoked and loved as a father; and finally he should come to know Him as One who will take him to heaven if he has been good and righteous.

In the field of morals and virtue he would have the child develop temperance in eating and drinking; cleanliness and decorum in the use and care of food, dress, and body; respect toward superiors; and complaisance, so that he will execute promptly all things suggested by his superiors. He would have the mother aim for truthfulness, justice, generosity, love of work, patience, and courteousness in her child.

For Comenius the field of learning has a three-fold division; "we learn to know some things, to do some things, and to say some things." In the field of "knowing" he would have the child begin to gain a knowledge of natural things, optics, astronomy, geography, chronology, history, economics or household affairs, and politics. (An analysis of each will be given under Content and Method.) In the field of "doing" he classifies actions of the mind as well as the hand; he would have the child introduced to the principles of dialectics, to the foundation of arithmetic, and to geometric forms; he would have him learn to sing, and to use the hand in those activities which are basic to

1 Ibid., p. 19.
"every labor or work of art" and which "are familiar to all children."\(^1\) The field of "saying things" is the field of language. He would have the child articulate so that he can be understood and express to the point in his own language so much as he knows of things. In rhetoric he would have him come "to use natural actions, and, in case they hear, to understand and repeat a trope or figure."\(^2\) Finally, the child will be introduced to the rudiments of poetry by committing to memory certain verses or rhymes.

This labyrinth of purposes is likely to cause one to lose sight of the purpose which was uppermost at all times in the mind of Comenius. The following quotation clearly states his view: "Above all things, parents should be careful to imbue their children with truth, and not be satisfied with merely outward piety; apart from this, knowledge and manners, however refined, may be more injurious than beneficial."\(^3\)

Content and Materials of the "Mother School". For the content of early childhood education Comenius did not go far afield, but encouraged the mother to use the materials which were in the child's immediate environment. A knowledge of natural things was to be gained through the study of people, animals, fruits, elements, and land.

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 21.
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 21.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 70.
formations which were close at hand. The child's development in optics was to be gained through the beautiful in nature right around him and through colored and pictured objects. Geography advanced from the mere distinguishing between the cradle and mother's bosom, to a knowledge of the time and place for the child's various activities in the home, to a knowledge of the way to reach some well known places beyond the home. The content and materials of astronomy were possible to all; Comenius included here the sun and moon, their rising and setting, the various phases of the moon, and the shortness of the days in winter compared with those of summer. In chronology he would have them know what is morning, evening, noonday, midnight; that seven days make a week and the order in which they come; and that there are solemn festivals three times a year—birth of Christ, Easter, and Pentecost. History consisted in the placing in proper time and relationship the people and things with which they were acquainted and the various activities in which they had taken part. In household affairs he would have them know that father and mother rule; know how to care for their clothes, how to use chests, closets and etc.; and recognize the necessary domestic furniture. In regard to political knowledge he says,

"The political knowledge needful for these first years is indeed but little; for although they hear the names of sovereigns, governors, consuls, legislators, judges, etc., yet inasmuch as they do not visit the places where these functionaries perform, they cannot comprehend them, and could not if they did, inasmuch as they exceed their
capacity. 1

In this connection he would have them gradually comprehend whom they should obey, venerate, and respect. This in the early years would start in the home and in connection with the people in the home.

To Comenius arithmetic for these early years consists for the most part of counting—the ability to say the numbers in their rightful order and the observation of their use rather than the ability to use them themselves. In geometry the forms such as circle, line, square and the different measurements such as a finger's breadth, a span, a foot, a pint, a quart, a gallon have their place. Music is to be a matter of delight to the child; rattles, whistles, drums, pipes, and musical instruments are of particular value to those who are slow to sing. Singing of songs including hymns of praise and the sacred music of daily use he would early introduce. In the field of language short words are to be used to get the child to pronounce distinctly and articulately; language is never to be increased beyond the increase in knowledge of things. Childish poetry which is rhythmic and has rhyme the child should not only hear but learn.

Comenius would have the mother use stories with her children—apologues, animal stories, and fables. Toys, such as iron knives, wooden swords, plows, little carriages, sledges, mills, dishes, tables, little seats, pots and pans,

1 Ibid., p. 41.
and wooden horses with which they may exercise their bodies and minds should be provided. The desire of children to construct and express themselves through material means would be gratified in the use of clay, chips, wood, stone, and chalk.

As is clearly indicated in the above Comenius did not limit education even in these very early years to one or two subjects but introduced children to all fields in accordance with their stage of development. Although he considered all of these fields of importance, for him religion held first place. In the materials for the development of the religious life he includes the Lord's prayer, the Apostle's Creed, the Ten Commandments, evening and morning prayers, and grace before meals.

For his "Mother School" Comenius does not set up a formal system of education apportioning the instruction to certain years or months, for the following reasons:

(1) "Because all parents cannot observe such order in their homes as prevails in public schools, where no unusual matters disturb the regular course of things.

(2) "Because in this early age all children are not endowed with equal ability, some beginning to speak in the first year, some in the second, and some in the third."1

Freedom from the apportionment of knowledge to certain time periods gave to Comenius' early childhood education a certain

1 Ibid., p. 21,22.
naturalness and informality. He insists that all instruction in these early years should be in accordance with the interest and capabilities of children and should afford delight to the mind. This is consistent with his principle that learning should come easily and in keeping with the natural bent of the intellect.

Because Comenius tried to follow the way of nature he saw the value of play, of doing, and of sensory experience as methods of teaching young children. It is sufficient he says "for this age to comprehend spontaneously, imperceptibly, in play, so much as is convenient in the domestic circle." In another place when speaking of young children he says, "they cannot yet be occupied in real works, and we should play with them." Doing or constructive activity is very closely associated with play; because children like to do things and because occupation is useful, Comenius would not have children restrained but "continually occupied in doing something, carrying, drawing, construction, and transposing, provided always that whatever they do be done prudently." He would not take little children far beyond their horizon to teach them but would have their senses exercised and taught to distinguish objects that immediately surround them.

Play and doing are closely associated with the physical welfare of the child; these activities Comenius says are

1 Ibid., p. 81.
2 Ibid., p. 44.
3 Ibid., p. 44.
conducive to sleep, digestion and growth. In addition he insists on temperance in all things, regularity in eating, sleeping and play, and protection from excessive hardships such as bruises, extremes of heat or cold, hunger and thirst. Because of his interest in the physical well-being of the child he gives in addition specific directions for the life of the mother and care of the child even before birth.

The question and answer method has its place in his scheme. For example, when instructing in natural things he would ask, "What is this?" "The ear." "What do you do with it?" "I hear." This same method he uses in instruction in piety and morals; in answer to the question, "where does God dwell", the child is expected to point to heaven and say, "God is there from whom we have food, drink and clothes."

In the fields of morals and piety he believes example to be of greatest importance.

"Nothing, therefore, more requires the care of parents who really desire their children's safety," he says, "than that, while instructing them as to all good things, they should likewise secure them against the access of all evil things byconducting themselves piously and holily, and by enjoining the same on their families and all their domestics."1

By means of example he would have the child come to bend the knee, fold his hands, and quietly look upwards in prayer. While example here held first place for Comenius, he did not omit instruction of the question and answer variety, memorization or "duly regulated discipline."2 A child who had done

1 Ibid., p. 78, 79.
2 Ibid., p. 56.
something unbecoming he would rebuke but rebuke "prudently." Following an admonition he would sometimes add a threat, and if this was ineffectual, he would resort to the rod or slap of the hand. The slightest sign of improvement was to be followed immediately by praise. All disciplining during the teaching of pious things he would have done prudently "lest, instead of loving, they should begin to dislike sacred things." In the memorization of prayers, creeds, verses and songs he advocates two methods. Short selections should be learned through the hearing of them repeated daily; long ones, such as the Lord's Prayer and Apostle's Creed, should be taught, not as a whole but petition by petition.

1 Ibid., p. 76.
III. The Life of Friedrich Froebel.

A. Early Life and Education.

Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel was born on April 21, 1782* at Oberweissbach, a village in the Thuringian Forest, in the small principality of Swarzburg - Rudolstadt. His mother died when he was but nine months old. His father, a principal clergyman in the Old Lutheran Protestant Church, was so busy with the care of the five thousand souls scattered throughout six or seven villages that he had little time to devote to Friedrich. As a result the child was left to the care of servants who in turn handed him over to the care of his older brothers. When Friedrich was four years old, his father married again. The child's loneliness and desire for a mother's love and care led him to welcome his new mother with simple child-like faith and love. For a time she satisfied his need, but when a little son of her own came, Friedrich was again left mainly to the care of his brothers and the servants. Until he was ten years of age the education of this introspective child was gained for the most part through his wanderings in the woods where he gained a great love for the flowers, birds, trees and animals, and through work among the plants and flowers of his father's garden. His father did teach him to read, but with such difficulty that he despaired of teaching him anything more.

* R. H. Quick in his Essays on Educational Reformers gives 1783 as the year of Froebel's birth but all other sources including Froebel's Autobiography give 1782.
The only direct regular education that he received before his tenth year was in the village school for girls, where the major emphasis was placed upon the memorization of Bible-texts and hymns.

At the close of 1792, when Froebel was ten years of age, his mother's brother, Superintendent Hoffman, took pity on him and gave him a home at Stadt-Ilm. Here for four years the boy lived a free, happy life with his earnest but gentle and humane uncle. In the town school of Stadt-Ilm he was introduced to the regular school subjects. Education through books and formal instruction was not particularly suited to this dreamy, introspective lad who was always seeking for hidden connections and unity. The piecemeal studies of school did not furnish this, and his lack of interest and his restlessness soon won for him the title of dunce.

Because Froebel was considered unworthy of a university education, and because two of his brothers were already in the university and his father's means could not finance a third, he was apprenticed for two years (1797-1799) to a forester in Thuringia. This was to be his first step toward becoming a thorough agriculturist. It was here that he began to become truly acquainted with nature and to slowly but surely gain an insight into the essential unity of nature's laws. His life of solitude in the forest and his devotion to nature did much to strengthen his tendency to mysticism. Looking back at this period he writes, "My religious church life now changed to a religious communion with Nature, and
in the last half-year I lived entirely amongst and with my plants, which drew me towards them with fascination." In addition he had a life of study which was devoted for the most part to mathematics and languages. In midsummer of 1799 he returned home with a great desire to pursue the study of the natural sciences and mathematics.

He was at home only a few weeks when he was called upon by his father to convey some money to his brother who was studying at the university of Jena. Through the persuasion of his brother he was allowed to remain the rest of the term. The continuance of his study during the following year was made possible through the realization of some property which he had inherited from his mother. He spent the year wandering from lecture room to lecture room trying to find the underlying unity of the sciences but constantly feeling dissatisfied with the arbitrary arrangement of the courses. "Instead of studying hard at a few things, he was thinking about unity and diversity, the relation of the whole of nature to its parts, and of the parts to the whole." After a year and a half at Jena the failure of means brought his life here to a close; for nine weeks he was imprisoned for a debt of thirty shillings. When discharged at the beginning of the summer of 1801 he returned home with a somewhat heavy heart.

A short stay at home was followed by a place with some

relatives at Hildburghausen where he was given the opportunity of studying farming. He soon discovered that the regular farming occupations did not attract him greatly. Because of the failing health of his father, he was again called home. It was during this period before the father's death, in February, 1802, that father and son became better acquainted and more sympathetic with each other. Froebel was twenty years of age when his father's death left him to shift for himself.

For the next three and a half years he did varied types of work. At Easter in the year 1802 he became actuary clerk in the Forestry Department at Bamberg; again he spent much of his time in companionship with nature and educated people. When the seat of this work was shifted to Bavaria, Froebel obtained employment as a land-surveyor. This temporary work was soon superseded in 1804 by posts as secretary and accountant. In 1805 a small inheritance, left him by the death of his uncle Hoffman, made it possible for him once again to pursue his studies. He determined to throw his energy into the study of architecture, and with that as his goal he went to Frankfurt-on-Main. Shortly after his arrival, however, his acquaintance with Dr. Gruner, a disciple of Pestalozzi and the head of the Frankfurt Model School, led to a change in his purpose. Dr. Gruner was convinced that Froebel's real field was that of a schoolmaster. "Give up architecture," said he; "it is not your vocation at all. Become a teacher in our school. Say you agree, and the place shall be
After some hesitation, Froebel accepted.

B. Froebel's Educational Career.

Architecture, surveying, agriculture, all of Froebel's former vocational pursuits were dropped for that of teaching. After his teaching of the thirty or forty boys began, he wrote to his brother, "It seemed as if I had found something I had never known, but always longed for, always missed, as if my life had at last discovered its native element. I felt as happy as the fish in the water, the bird in the air." After this first enthusiasm wore off he began again his process of self-searching, and decided he was lacking in knowledge and training for this type of work. Dr. Gruner perceived Froebel's restlessness and gave him the writings of Pestalozzi; these so fired his desire that as soon as the holidays permitted, at the end of August, he set out for Yverdon. He was eager to become acquainted with the great reformer who "proclaimed an education in accordance with nature." After a visit of two weeks, during which he saw much that pleased him and much that left him in doubt, he returned to Frankfurt with the determination that he would someday return for a longer stay. In October he resumed his teaching and met with great success. Nevertheless, the formality of a set system of education was not in keeping with his nature and in addition he continued to feel his lack of

1 Michaelis and Moore, op. cit., p. 51.
2 Ibid., p. 58.
3 Bowen, H. C., op. cit., p. 16.
preparation. At the end of two years, therefore, he sought release, found a substitute for his place, and retired.

Froebel now assumed the tutorship of three young brothers whom he had previously tutored in arithmetic and language. His dissatisfaction with his work with them led him to seek the permission of the parents to take his pupils, in the summer of 1808, to the celebrated institution of Pestalozzi at Yverdon. Here for two years Froebel lived the combined life of teacher and pupil. Among the things which he saw and considered of particular value, and which later influenced his own educational scheme were the plays and games and the walks conducted by Pestalozzi. In 1810 he returned with his pupils to Frankfurt. Having definitely determined to devote his life to educational reform, he longed to continue his university study but had to remain in his present position until July of 1811.

At the close of his tutorial work Froebel proceeded at once to the University of Gottingen. His absorption in languages was soon replaced by his old interest in science. For this reason he left Gottingen for the University of Berlin where the lectures of Professor Weiss on natural history and mineralogy were attracting so much attention. His study here helped to strengthen his conviction that the development of all life is founded upon one law and that an understanding of this unity would help in working out the principles of human development.

His study was interrupted this time by the call of the
King of Prussia to deliver the German states from the yoke of Napoleon. Froebel enlisted at once and went through the campaign of 1813. This interruption in his educational career was rewarded by the friendships of two Berlin students, William Middendorff and Henry Langethal, who became his most devoted fellow-workers.

In July of 1814 when his regiment was disbanded, he returned to Berlin where he became assistant to Professor Weiss in the Royal Museum of Mineralogy. His work and study here impressed upon him more and more the essential unity of nature and human nature. He saw in the organisms of nature a certain order of development and believed that man too might develop as naturally if the laws of his being were discovered. His supreme purpose was the education of man, and his work in the museum was merely a step toward the realization of that goal. To Langethal and Middendorff, whom he rediscovered in Berlin, he expressed his theories and hopes, and, counting on them for support, he resigned his position in 1816 in order that he might set about realizing his idea of the new education.

With the two sons of his brother Christian, and the three orphan sons of his brother Christoph as pupils Froebel opened at Griesheim, in Nov., 1816, his "Universal German Educational Institute." Previous to his coming to Griesheim he had written his two friends to join him in working out his new system of education. In April, 1817, Middendorff arrived. In June of that year the institution moved to Keilhau where
Langethal joined the enterprise. By June, 1818, the school numbered twelve pupils. In September Froebel married Henrietta Wilhelmine Hoffmeister, a highly cultured woman and pupil of Schleiermacher and Pichte. Although the school grew, the little community was often in straits for money and food. In 1820 Christian Froebel with his family joined the community and contributed his possessions to the educational experiment. By 1822 the School-house, which was sorely needed, was completed, and the life of the cause became more hopeful. Barop, who joined the community at this time, later became head of the institution. Opposition and accusations of socialistic tendencies caused the attendance to drop, in 1829, to five pupils.

While on a visit to Frankfurt, Froebel met a friend who proposed that an institute be set up in his castle at Wartensee in Lucerne. With his nephew, Ferdinand, Froebel set off for Wartensee where, in August, 1831, he opened his school. Opposition of the Catholic clergy, who considered this a protestant invasion, made success of the school an impossibility. The suggestion that they move to Willisau, still in the canton of Lucerne, was accepted. On May 2, 1833, the institute was opened here with thirty-six pupils. In spite of clerical opposition the school continued, although it never proved a prosperous undertaking. The Swiss government was eager to use Froebel, however, and sent teachers to him for instruction. He was invited to Burgdorf to organize an orphanage and to give lectures to teachers.
Accompanied by his wife and Langethal, Froebel removed to Burgdorf to establish the proposed orphanage and conduct the lectures. In telling of this period in Froebel's life, Barop writes, "The necessity of training gifted capable mothers occupied his soul, and the importance of the education of childhood's earliest years became more evident to him than ever." The ill health of his wife made it necessary for him to resign his position and return with her to Berlin before he had even become "Waisenvater" (father of the orphans). With Barop at Keilhau, Middendorff at Willisau, and Langethal and Ferdinand Froebel at Burgdorf the educational institutions started by Froebel were cared for, and Froebel himself was left free for other educational endeavors.

While at Berlin he examined the recently established infant schools. On his return to Keilhau in 1837, he had clearly in mind the idea of an institution for the education of little children and soon opened such an institution in the neighboring town of Blankenburg. During this period occurred the death of his wife. To forget his loss he threw himself into his work with renewed vigor. His work soon began to attract attention, and several young teachers, who later established kindergartens, were sent to him for training.

"Long did he rack his brains for a suitable name for his new scheme," Barop writes. "Middendorff and I were one day walking to Blankenburg with him over the Steiger Pass. He kept on repeating, 'Oh, if I could only think of a suitable name for my youngest born!' Blankenburg lay at our feet, and he

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1 \text{ Michaelis and Moore, op. cit., p. 136.}
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walked moodily towards it. Suddenly he stood still as if fettered fast to the spot, and his eyes assumed a wonderful, almost resplendent brilliancy. Then he shouted to the mountains so that it echoed to the four winds of heaven, 'Eureka! I have it! Kindergarten shall be the name of the new institution!'\(^1\)

Convinced of the importance of the Kindergarten, Froebel described his system in a weekly newspaper which had for its motto, "Come let us live with our children." In connection with his Kindergarten at Blankenburg he started a course of instruction for teachers. While his principles were gaining in popularity, his institution had to be given up in 1843 because of lack of funds. Before leaving Blankenburg he published his most popular work, *Mutter-und Kose-lieder*, which is a song and picture book for mothers and children.

Discouraged with the reception he received from men and most professional teachers, he turned his efforts to the training of women for work with little children. This work he carried on at Keilhau, at Liebenstein, in the duchy of Meiningen, and in Marienthal. At Liebenstein, in 1849, he attracted to his circle Baroness Bertha von Marenholtz-Bulaw, a woman of great ability, who did more than any other person besides Froebel to spread the Kindergarten idea.

in 1850 Froebel moved to a little country-seat at Marienthal, the use of which as a training school had been obtained through the help of Baroness von Marenholtz-Bulaw. In July, 1851, he married again, and it seemed as if his days would at last be peaceful when trouble came upon him from

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 137.
an unexpected source. The work of Friedrich became associated with the work of his nephew, Karl, who was an advanced liberal and published pamphlets of a socialistic nature. As a result Kindergartens were banished from Prussia in August, 1851. To Froebel the curtailment of his work was a blow, but the accusation of atheism was an even greater blow.

Although Prussia was closed to his work the rest of Germany was open and he continued his teaching at Marienthal with the assistance of his wife. On April 21, 1852, his seventieth birthday was celebrated in the presence of a happy family gathering. The cheer which this brought him was soon overshadowed by the attack of the Hamburg papers upon his orthodoxy. Following a general conference of teachers held at Gotha, where Froebel was shown great respect and honor, he returned to Marienthal weak and broken in health. Day by day he grew weaker, until, on June 21, "the old friend and benefactor of children fell asleep."  

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1 Bowen, H. C. op. cit., p. 42.
IV. Froebel's Conception of Early Childhood Education.

Like Comenius Froebel's interest in early childhood education was the natural culmination of his experiences. He was practically deprived of both parents early in life; that is, his mother's death while he was still in infancy, his father's lack of time and understanding of the child, and his step-mother's indifference made him virtually an orphan. He was denied the love and sympathy for which childhood naturally craves. Being of a sensitive temperament, and in addition inclined to introspection and self-analysis, he suffered intensely. "Far from becoming embittered and cynical, he devoted himself and all his powers to the task of saving other children from similar bitter experiences."¹ In an address to the ladies of Hamburg he made the following allusion to this period in his life and its influence:

"I have the pleasure," he said, "of presenting to you an idea which is great and holy, an idea whose realization must lead to the happiness of mankind. Fate decided upon me and chose me for its bearer without having consulted me beforehand. It showed me the importance of an education conformable to nature by giving me bitter experiences and privations, while the early loss of my mother threw me upon self-education. What one has been obliged to contend with bitterly, he wishes to soften to his fellow men."²

A. Factors in His Philosophy of Education Which Form a Foundation for His "Kindergarten."

Froebel's theory of education rests back upon his idealistic, mystical, and almost pantheistic philosophy of life.

¹ Fletcher and Welton. Froebel's Chief Writings on Education. New York, 1912, p. 3.
This philosophy was derived from his communion with nature rather than from a careful study of the various systems, a study which his rather desultory education could hardly afford. To gain a conception of his theory of education for the development of young children it is necessary to examine the foundation on which this theory rests.

Nature of Man. To Froebel nature, organic and inorganic, and human nature come out of God and are still in God; that is, the world and everything in it has a divine essence from God. God is not limited to the world, neither is He separate from the world, but the world is in Him, though He himself extends beyond the world. The divine essence which is in all creation gives to it a certain unity which is God. In the opening section of his Education of Man he says, "God is the sole source of all things. In all things there lives and reigns the Divine Unity, God...... The divine effluence that lives in each thing is the essence of each thing."¹ This unity of nature and human nature with the divine implies one basic law for all; it likewise implies the goodness of all creation, since God, the very essence of all, is good. Human nature then, though liable to error, he believes, is in its elements good. Since God created man in his own image, man should be considered and treated as a manifestation of God in human form.

Not only is there unity in all of creation, there is diversity as well. Through his study of natural history,

¹ Froebel, F. The Education of Man. N. Y., 1890, p. 2.
Froebel discovered that organic and inorganic nature develop in a certain progression in accordance with the laws inherent in each, laws which are manifestations of the one universal law; the essence in each thing develops in its own special way giving diversity to the natural world. Man, like nature, originating in the same source, is subject to the same law of natural development which rules the whole universe, but likewise has special laws, which are the manifestations of the one law, by which he realizes his divine essence. Although the individual within the race, subject to the laws governing the race, must pass through all the stages already traversed, the essence within each develops in its own special way resulting in individuality and giving diversity to the world of human nature.

To Froebel God has enfolded in a certain order in man all that he is ever to be and become, and his development is a matter of unfolding that which is already within. The newborn child is not merely to become a man, but the man with all of his talents and the unity of his nature is within the child. He explains that all knowledge, all ideas are present in germ form in the mind at birth and need only to be unfolded. "There is a certain course or sequence," writes Froebel, "in the development of all things, which the Creator has followed in building up the race, and which the human being must be allowed to follow if he is ever to approach perfection."¹

In the above it is plainly seen that man comes under the influence of and is closely connected with three great powers: nature, humanity, and God. His body connects him with nature, his heart and mind with humanity, and his whole being lives and moves in God.

Purpose of Education. For Froebel the purpose of education from the standpoint of knowledge is threefold: To lead the individual (1) to a knowledge of himself and of man in general; (2) to a knowledge of God, the source of all being; (3) and to a knowledge of nature which issues from and is conditioned by the spiritual. Such knowledge should bring him to a clearness of understanding in regard to himself, "to peace with nature, and union with God."¹ Knowledge is not his final aim of education; the pure and holy life, which knowledge merely conditions, is his supreme goal. His emphasis on the religious or spiritual purpose of education is a direct result of his conception of the nature of man. Since man has within him the divine essence which constantly seeks to unfold, education should assist in this process; through education "the divine essence of man should be unfolded, brought out, lifted into consciousness, and man himself raised into free, conscious obedience to the divine principle that lives in him, and to a free representation of this principle in his life."²

¹ Froebel, F., op. cit., p. 5.
² Ibid., p. 5.
"Religious-mindedness and religious-minded industry" he would have as "the flower and fruit" of the educational process.¹

Content and Method of Education. Since to Froebel man is not a wax tablet upon which impressions must be made but has within him the "germs" of all that he is to become, education is more than a pouring-in process, it is a process of development;

"it is a development by which the individual comes into realization of the life of the all-encompassing unity of which he is but a unit; a development by which his life broadens until it has related itself to nature, until it enters sympathetically into all the activities of society, until it participates in the achievements of the race and the aspirations of humanity." ²

The following principles are basic to Froebel's educational practice; they help to show not only the meaning of development but the inseparability of content and method.

a. Continuity and Connectedness.

Froebel believes that humanity has developed as a continuous stream; the Creator has followed a definite sequence in building up the race. In each human being closely connected with humanity lies humanity as a whole. Because of this it is necessary for each human being to pass through the continuous phases of development that the Creator has followed in building up the race. The individual's life, therefore, is a continuous affair, each stage depending upon

¹Bowen, H. C., op. cit., p. 96.
the preceding one. If his development is to be adequate, it must be a continuous affair proceeding from one point to the next without any gaps.

Froebel goes even farther in his thought of continuity and connectedness. In the external means by which education is to be achieved he sees a continuity of development which is similar to the continuity of development in man. The various stages through which these external means pass correspond with the successive needs of the developing human soul and become, therefore, in essence symbols, an indirect means through which God reveals himself, through which man comes to know abstract truths.

To Froebel education of the right kind is a continuous, connected whole, each part related to every other part and each helping to advance every other part. He considers the division of the field of education into various subjects as artificial. He sees an interconnection of all of the parts of knowledge and would have knowledge come to the individual in an orderly, continuous, and natural way. The materials of instruction he would select from the surrounding life of the individual as that life comes within his experience.


According to Froebel the divine essence in man, which is the real self, is constantly seeking to realize itself or unfold; the self or mind, therefore, "is not so much possessed of activity as it is activity."1 His belief that God

1 Ibid., p. 654.
was enfolds within the individual all that he is to be or become and that development is a process of unfolding indivi-
dual activity. Self-activity then is the opposite of compulsion; it is response to the force felt within the indi-
vidual's own nature; it is what the individual does freely and naturally because it satisfies his self and its demands.
This naturally influenced Froebel's conception of discipline. "Education," he says, "originally and in its first principles, should necessarily be passive, following (only guarding and protecting), not prescriptive, categorical, interfering."\(^1\)
It is only when the original wholeness of the individual has been marred that he would have education become directive and interfering.


Froebel claims that nothing can be fully known unless it is connected with the opposite of its kind. A child cannot fully appreciate hot unless he knows cold; he cannot know soft unless he knows hard. He even goes so far as to insist that the child gains special development if he uses the play materials, which Froebel himself devised, in accordance with this law of opposites. For example, after laying a block on one side of a center, in the making of a symmetrical design, the child must place the next block on the "opposite" side. Later in his development of educational theory Froebel goes even farther and claims that "development is due to the

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\(^1\) Froebel, F. op. cit., p. 7.
reconciliation of opposites through the link of mediation.\textsuperscript{1} For this reason he uses the cylinder as the link of mediation between the sphere and cube. He insists on oblique lines being associated with perpendicular and horizontal ones. He considers this law so basic to the development of life, so basic to the process of reasoning, that he insists his educational system will stand or fall on its acceptance or non-acceptance. Nothing can be known, according to Froebel, unless it is connected with the opposite of its kind. This law rests back upon the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis concept of the philosophies of his day.\textsuperscript{2}

B. The "Kindergarten."

In speaking of his institution in one of his letters Froebel writes, "It is like some wondrous garden, nay, it is a very garden, wherein God trains His children for the aim and purpose of their existence."\textsuperscript{3} The books that Froebel wrote which give us the best conception of this Kindergarten are - Pedagogics of the Kindergarten, Education by Development, and Mutter-und Kose-lieder. His letters are likewise invaluable in helping us reconstruct our picture. That Froebel considered his Mutter-und Kose-lieder the foundation of the Kindergarten is evident when he says, "I have here laid down the fundamental ideas of my educational principles. Whoever

\textsuperscript{1} Kilpatrick, W. H. \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 14, 15.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid., pp. 14-16.
has grasped the pivot idea of this book understands what I am aiming at.\textsuperscript{1}

Conception of the Child. Froebel's principle of unity is re-emphasized in his analysis of the nature of the child. Not only does the child have unity with God and all of life through his divine essence, but there is unity and continuity within his own life from infancy onward. In his introduction to the Commentaries he writes to mothers, "You know that God is One, and since your child is in his image you are sure that he, too, is a unity indivisible and indissoluble."\textsuperscript{2} In the child he sees man as a whole in germ form. This thought he expresses over and over again in various ways throughout his writings: "the unity of humanity and of man appears in childhood; the whole future activity of man has its germs in the child;"\textsuperscript{3} "all the child is ever to be or become, lies - however slightly indicated - in the child;"\textsuperscript{4} "as the life of man in all the necessary variety of its phenomena is in itself a complete unity, one can recognize and consider even in the first baby life, though only in their slightest traces and most delicate germs, all the spiritual activities which in later life become predominant;"\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{1} Bowen, H. C. \textit{op. cit.}, p. 64
\textsuperscript{2} Eliot and Blow. \textit{The Mottoes and Commentaries.} New York, 1901, p. 53
\textsuperscript{3} Froebel, F. \textit{op. cit.}, p. 36
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid., p. 68.
\textsuperscript{5} Froebel, F. \textit{Pedagogics of the Kindergarten.} New York, 1898, p. 30.
"where there is not the germ of something, that something can never be called forth and appear."  

While Froebel says that the various instincts and tendencies of life are developed in each child in the same general order in which they develop in humanity as a whole, he insists that each is an individuality and passes through these phases of human development and culture in his own peculiar manner. The child, an individuality distinctly separate from all other individualities, has an instinctive yearning, however, for unification with these others. 

Froebel was convinced that the child, "though liable to error, is in its elements as free from evil and falsity --- as completely what it should be --- as nature under every aspect and in every other manifestation." But nature, he says, seldom shows itself in its original purity in man. Nevertheless, he would have us presuppose this goodness in the child "until the contrary is clearly manifest. Otherwise, the original state where it might still be found intact might easily be destroyed."  

Since to Froebel the self or mind is in its very essence active, he naturally considers spontaneous action or self-activity as the chief characteristic of the child. "God," he says, "created man in his own image; therefore, man should create and bring forth like God." 

---"Ibid., p. 31.  
2 Froebel, F. Education of Man. New York, 1890, p. 36.  
3 Bowen, H. C. op. cit., p. 92.  
4 Fletcher and Welton, op. cit., p. 33.  
5 Froebel, F. Education of Man. New York, 1890, p. 31."
at the above conclusion not merely through a process of reasoning but through a study of the child who displayed as his most striking characteristic restlessness, activity, "the impulse to busy himself."\(^1\) What he observed was not only activity of body, that is, delight in the motion of the limbs; but activity of mind, a curiosity about and a desire to examine everything.

Froebel says that from the child's impulse to busy himself proceed habit and imitation. The three --- spontaneous and independent activity, habit, and imitation --- are in his thinking closely united and "the surest devices for the early correct treatment of the child."\(^2\)

He tells us that the child is endowed with senses, the means by which he may know the external world; with bodily strength and limbs, by which he may give expression to his inner nature; with "an anticipating and individual soul," by which he may comprehend spiritual unity.\(^3\) He believes the sense of hearing develops first and then the sense of sight.

With the advancing development of the senses, he says, "there is developed in the child, simultaneously and symmetrically, the use of the body, of the limbs."\(^4\)

The child is seen as an imaginative creature, one who "begins to represent his inner being outwardly", who "imputes the same activity to all about him, to the pebble and

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\(^2\) Ibid., p. 28.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 33.
\(^4\) Froebel, F. Education of Man. New York, 1890, p. 47.
chip of wood, to the plant, the flower, and the animal."¹

Froebel recognized the importance of the emotional life of the child; his own childhood experiences being his best teacher. In one of his letters he writes, "The manner in which we are educated, and in general treated, in our earliest childhood has, as we all know, a remarkable influence upon our emotions, our thoughts, our actions, during the whole of our life."² His insistence on the nourishment of the child's love and sense of wonder, his provision for opportunities of expressing that love through the doing of things for others, his emphasis on an appreciation of the beautiful, and his utilization of rhythmic play, all point to his belief in the importance of the emotional life of the child.

Place and Teacher.

In the homes of his day Froebel saw little being done to satisfy the child's impulse to self-activity; what little was done he says was not "in accord with the nature of man."³ The means and objects of such employment he found to be not only too little but inappropriate and often entirely lacking. In addition, those within the home were often lacking in the skill that was necessary for fostering the child's impulse to activity.⁴ Froebel's discovery that children are sociable and need the

¹ Ibid., p. 54.
³ Froebel, F. Pedagogics of the Kindergarten. New York, 1898, p. 16.
⁴ Ibid., pp. 16, 17.
sympathy of companions pointed out to him the value in the coming together of children from different homes. This coming together he felt would not only satisfy their social nature but be beneficial to their moral development as well.\(^1\) Therefore, to counteract the lack of time, apparatus, and trained skill in the development of the child in the home and to give the child the right kind of social environment in which to express and develop his social and moral nature, Froebel established his institution known as the "Kindergarten" or Garden of Children.

It was not Froebel's aim to minimize the work of the home and mother. His *Mutter-und Kose-lieder*, written originally for the use of mothers with little children, shows very clearly that he considered the mother the greatest factor in the early life of the child. The Kindergarten was merely to add to her work and make it more effective. Because of the indifference of men and professional teachers in general to the problem of the development of early childhood and because of Froebel's belief that an understanding and control of early child-life lie "close to the watchful woman's-soul and mother's-instinct,"\(^2\) he turned to women and young girls for leadership in his institution. For their training he gave lectures, planned courses, and established institutions.

In mild weather he would have the Kindergarten held "in an open-air space shaded with trees," and "in winter

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1 Quick, K. H. *op. cit.*, p. 407.
in a large, pleasantly warmed room."¹ He would have the teachers in this garden "undertake the entire care and training of the child from the earliest possible age to school-age, that is, till he is six or seven years old. As to age," he explains, "much depends upon the grade of development of the individual child, and much upon the culture of the teacher."²

The purpose of Froebel's aims for his Kindergarten rest back upon his general purpose of education which, when summarized and stated in a few words, is the realization of one's "divine essence." "This development and cultivation of man to attain his destiny, to fulfil his vocation," he says, "is a perpetual, uninterruptedly continuous, unseparated whole, always rising from one stage to another."³

Quick states the aims for the kindergarten stage in Froebel's own words, "to give the children employment in agreement with their whole nature, to strengthen their bodies, to exercise their senses, to engage their awakening mind, and through their senses to bring them to acquaintance with nature and their fellow-creatures;——to guide aright the heart and the affections, and to lead them to the original ground of all life, to unity with themselves."⁴ Unity with themselves, the guiding of the children "back upon their own nature,"⁵ was

¹ Bowen, H. C. op. cit., p. 103.
³ Ibid., p. 122.
⁴ Quick, R. H. op. cit., p. 409.
Froebel's primary aim, but he tells us in one of his letters,

"I have always had a definite second purpose, namely, to lead them onward to observe the life of the outer world, of the cosmos, and especially of the physical nature that most closely surrounds them.....Thus I hope.....to bring the children to a practical (and by 'practical' I mean such as can be turned to real use in every day life), to a practical knowledge of God, His words, and His modes of action, and therefore of His nature, and of His will; and then they will not only be capable of recognising and examining into the will of God, but also of acting in accordance with it." ¹

Froebel's secondary aim became the ultimate aim for his Kindergarten if we are to judge from Froebel's own words:

"The ultimate aim and special purpose of my games and system of play is to bring the children, through the aid of physical nature and animal life (here especially represented by children's love, and our love for children, with the mutually reflex actions of these),—and also through Jesus, as the greatest lover of children—to a true union with God in sentiment, thought and action; that is, to a truly religious state."²

To Froebel the religious life and the moral life are very closely connected, for all of life and education, because of his conception of life, is religious. In his development of the religious life of the child he would not aim for a knowledge of catechism or dogma but for union with God. This God he would have the child come to know as a fatherly guardian whose "fatherly loving protection and help" are with him in all of the occurrences of his life.³ He tells us that the child must come gradually to a knowledge of the truths

¹ Michaelis, E. and Moore, H. loc. cit.
² Michaelis, E. and Moore, H. loc. cit.
³ Bowen, H. C. op. cit., p. 118.
of Christianity as he experiences them in his own life. He objects to the teaching of such precepts as "If you are good you will be happy."\(^1\) Outward incentives, he believes, are degrading, and he therefore "protests strongly against holding out bribes to virtue, either for this world or the next."\(^2\)

Knowledge as such, the mere accumulation of so many facts in the mind, has little place in Froebel's aims. He does consider knowledge as a rich store-house, a store-house which should not be valued for its own sake but only as it leads to complete living.

The senses he considers of great importance in the development of the early life of the child. He would have mothers and teachers "awaken the senses as organs of the mind, and not as the organs of mere sensuous pleasure, or of mere desires, as in animals."\(^3\) He would have them endeavor "to create such impressions upon the child's mind, through material or concrete things, as, according to the analogy between thought and its embodiment, are the prototypes of ideas and conceptions."\(^4\)

Activity is basic in Froebel's Kindergarten. He would not, however, leave the child's activities or play vague or purposeless. "Just as the senses are to be organs of the mind, so the activities are to be expressions of the mind — of the mind of the actor, the child."\(^5\) In every occupation

1 Ibid., p. 119.
2 Ibid., p. 119.
3 Bowen, H. C., op. cit., p. 113.
4 Bowen, H. C. loc. cit.
5 Ibid., p. 115.
in the Kindergarten he would have children encouraged to use their efforts for the pleasure and help of others. In addition he would have cooperative activities for the purpose of developing in them a sense of mutual responsibility and feeling of fellowship. Those activities he considers best which lead the child into harmony with those about him, harmony with nature and God, and to a better understanding of his own life.

Froebel would have the child grow up in communion with nature. Through this influence the child should learn

"that laws underlie all organic formation, and that conformity with those laws is the fundamental, unvarying condition of all true progress towards perfection; should catch glimpses of laws applying to himself; should come to see or surmise, gradually and of course only very slowly, that all these laws in nature and in himself are in reality but various modes and manifestations of one law, and thus link together, or reconcile, by a wider conception, what seems separate or opposed; should, through the loving care he bestows on animals and plants, enlarge his heart and sympathies, and prepare himself for the loving care he is to bestow on human beings; should, by studying and imitating the conformity of God's works, find and love God as the creator of nature, and as his own creator; and should breathe in the peace which rules in nature and in occupations connected with nature, before the noise of the world and sin enter his being."1

Content and Materials of the Kindergarten. Because Froebel believed that the Creator follows a certain order in the development of all things, organic and inorganic, and that the steps in the development of the inorganic correspond to the development in man, he reached the conclusion

1 Ibid., p. 98, 99.
that these external things are the materials of education which make possible the unfolding of that which is in germ form in the child. He believed that if these things could be arranged in a certain order to correspond to the development in man, one would have a perfect system of education.\footnote{Kilpatrick, Wm. \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 66-71.}

For this purpose he devised a series of "gifts" which form the core of his kindergarten curriculum. In one of his letters Froebel tells us that "a course of training and occupations for children, answering to the laws of development and the laws of life, demanded a thoroughly expressive medium in the shape of materials for these occupations and games for the child: therefore, to meet this want I arranged a series of gifts for play."\footnote{Michaelis and Moore. \textit{Froebel's Letters on the Kindergarten.} London, 1891, p. 250.} The derivation of this gift series, as is indicated above, is based upon an assumed parallel in the laws of development of things and man.

The following materials Froebel designates as "gifts"; the activities in connection with these he calls occupations.\footnote{Monroe, Paul. \textit{Text-Book in the History of Education}, p. 666. Bowen, H. C. \textit{op. cit.}, p. 146. Wiebi, Edward. \textit{Paradise of Childhood}, Springfield, p. 6.}

\begin{enumerate}
\item Six rubber balls, covered with a net-work of twine or worsted of various colors.
\end{enumerate}

Froebel chose the ball as the child's first plaything for the following reasons: (a) It symbolizes unity; (b) it is the "counterpart of the child and his opposite"; (c) it is
the foundation or germ of all other forms; (d) it trains the mind; (e) it trains the body; (f) it socializes the child; (g) the child likes it.¹

The symbolic significance of the ball is the essential one with Froebel. The knowledge of the all-inclusive Unity, God, he tells us, is in the child in germ form. Through playing with the ball, a symbol of undifferentiated Unity, the child gains some understanding of the All of God. The ball, however, is only the initial symbol of Unity. If the child's growth is to continue along this line, other symbols must be given him. The ball, according to Froebel, is the germ-form from which all of the other gifts are derived. The ball symbolizes undifferentiated unity which is the characteristic of the young child; the other gifts, which have their germ in the ball, pass through a process of differentiation and integration to differentiated unity which, Froebel asserts, is the process of normal growth of the individual.²

(2) Sphere, cube, cylinder, made of wood.

Froebel chose the cube to follow the sphere or ball because it is in keeping with his law of "opposites" and because it leads to certain mathematical concepts.³ By playing with these opposites the child was to gain more than just a contrast of geometric qualities; according to Froebel, the child's

¹ Kilpatrick, Wm. op. cit., p. 111.
² Kilpatrick, Wm. op. cit., pp. 111-121.
³ Kilpatrick, Wm. op. cit., p. 123.
dormant soul powers were developed — he gained an understanding of "unity in singleness" and "unity in manifoldness."¹ The cylinder, which unites the qualities of both, for Froebel was the synthesis in the reasoning process.

(3) A large cube, consisting of eight small cubes.

Froebel observed the desire of the child to pull things apart and to discover new ways of using them; in addition he saw the child's desire to put these parts together again in a whole.² This is an obvious reason for introducing into his play-materials a divided cube. When, however, he had made it a part of his materials, he attributed to it the following abstract function: "By the use of this gift are recognized, comprehended, and represented, gradually and increasingly, the general in the particular; the most general in the most particular; unity in the individual; the simple and unital in the various and manifold."³

(4) A large cube, consisting of eight brick forms.

There is no need to discuss the rest of the gifts in detail. Froebel's symbolic considerations and desire for the development of certain mathematical, physical, and logical concepts underlie all of them.⁴ The rest of the gift series in their order of development will merely be listed.

(5) A large cube consisting of twenty-seven cubes, and of these, three are divided diagonally into halves, and three

¹ Froebel, F. Pedagogics of the Kindergarten. New York, 1898, p. 70.
² Ibid., pp. 117, 118.
³ Ibid., pp. 120, 121.
⁴ Kilpatrick, w.m. op. cit., pp. 128, 129.
divided diagonally into quarters.

(6) A large cube divided into twenty-seven brick forms, and of these, three are divided lengthwise, and three are divided breadthwise.

(7) Square and triangular tablets for laying of figures.

(8) Staffs or sticks for laying of figures.

(9) Whole and half rings.

(10) Material for drawing.

(11) Material for perforating.

(12) Material for embroidering.

(13) Material for cutting of paper and combining pieces.

(14) Material for braiding.

(15) Slats for interlacing.

(16) The slat with many links.

(17) Material for intertwining.

(18) Material for paper folding.

(19) Material for peas-work.

(20) Material for modeling.

Froebel's study of child-nature brought him to a realization of the child's inborn desire for play. He noticed that children, when left to themselves, fall naturally to games in which they take great delight. In one of his letters he tells us, "A large majority of our games I have created, just as they are, simply by watching children at play, and then re-casting their games in the spirit of my whole system." 

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1 Wiebi, Edward. op. cit., pp. 6, 7.
the re-casting of the games to fit into his symbolic system took place sometime after his study at Pestalozzi's school, for he tells us in his autobiography that the "symbolic meaning of games" had not yet "dawned" upon him.¹

Some of his games are for the purpose of developing the physical side of the child. He asserts that in his action-games "all the main exercises of gymnastics are embodied."² There are always words with his games to lift them above the level of the merely physical side of life. His "Snail Song," which is sung as the children play, is a good example:

Hand in hand, as all can see,
Like a little snail go we;
Always nearer, always nearer;
Always, closer, always closer;
Always tighter, always tighter—
Till in closest union stand
All we children, hand in hand.³

Some of his games aim to develop the social life of the child. "Combined games for many children, and particularly action-games," he asserts, "train the child (by his very nature eager for companionship) in the habit of association with comrades."⁴ Other games develop the child's powers of observation; others exercise the senses; and others through imitation make possible an appreciation of workers in the child's community.

Most of the games Froebel developed are played in a circle.

To these he attributes a special symbolic value. Such games, he says, "hardly ever make the children tired." This he attributes to his claim that the circle "is the symbol of a triple life" (1) the symbol of the individual life, (2) of the life of nature, (3) "of the collective life of mankind in general, whose ultimate point of relation and of union also rests on the invisible midst of unity of all Life, upon God Himself." In another letter he claims that circle games will lead the children "towards a comprehension of the solar system and the orbital motion of worlds." In spite of all this symbolism Kilpatrick tells us that in the development of games Froebel "deserves entire credit for doing thoroughly pioneer work along this line. Others had written of it, still others had encouraged games as enjoyable recreation. Froebel first utilized them for their educative value."  

Songs have their place in Froebel's Kindergarten. He believed that direct precepts fetter a child, but that indirect suggestions in song permit a child to give expression to feelings aroused in him and bring freedom to his soul. Many of his songs deal with the world of nature and the activities of man as they were seen by the little German children of Froebel's day. The connection of songs with action games was mentioned before. They were likewise connected with building games. In writing to a cousin he tells of winning over a new teacher, "a musically gifted young man, to help me

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1 Ibid., p. 61.
2 Michaelis and Moore, loc. cit.
3 Ibid., p. 91.
4 Kilpatrick, Mm. op. cit., p. 155.
in my building-songs. Many pretty pieces, for single children, or for the whole class, with words and melodies, have we composed during these last weeks, most of them suggested by the free spontaneity of the children themselves.¹ In addition to the songs used with games and constructive activities, songs of worship were taught and sung both at the beginning and the close of the kindergarten session.²

Froebel naturally placed great value upon nature study. He would have the children introduced to that part of nature which is in their immediate surroundings and which most closely touches their needs. He includes here animals, birds, plants, flowers, trees, and table vegetables. The selection, he tells us, should be in keeping with the season.

The Mutter-und Kose-lieder which Froebel made the foundation for many of his lectures to Kindergarten teachers contains pictures, songs, games, verses, and stories. In the minds of the disciples of Froebel there has been some question in regard to the use of this book in the Kindergarten; many think it was meant for home use only. It is natural to suppose that the book was an outgrowth of Froebel's observations and experience with children in Blankenburg, for his institute for the education of little children was opened there in 1837 and the Mutter-und Kose-lieder was published in 1843.³ Bowen says, "It must be borne in mind that the book

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² Bowen, H. C. pp. 103, 104.
is in the first place addressed to mothers; and what is set forth is intended for home use. But, inasmuch as the kindergarten is a continuation and expansion of home-life, the same spirit and purpose which should inspire and direct the nursery should inspire and direct the garden of children, its games and songs and stories and occupations. 1

The pictures in this book are very detailed and contain different aspects of one thought. There is always a hidden, deeper meaning to the pictures which is brought out in the motto for the mother and the song to be sung to the child. The motto and song connected with the "Weather-cock" illustrate this. "The motto runs thus:

If your child's to understand  
Things that other people do,  
You must let his tiny hand  
Carry out the same things too.  
This is the reason why,  
Never still, 
Baby will  
Imitate whatever's by.

The song is to this effect:

As the cock up on the tower  
Turns in wind and storm and shower,  
Baby can bend his hand and learn  
To get new joy at every turn." 2

As the discussion on the Mutter-und Koselieder suggests, Froebel would have stories used with young children. Legends, fables, fairy-tales, stories related to incidents in daily life, nature stories, and those with a seasonal emphasis were not only recommended but written by him for use in the kindergarten. 3 Short poems, which to Froebel gave life to the

1 Bowen, H. C. op. cit., p. 67.  
2 Ibid., p. 65.  
3 Froebel, F. The Education of Man., p. 236.
objects of nature and which to him expressed the feelings that naturally well up in the soul of the child, were also provided.

In the development of the religious life of the child, Froebel did not exclude the use of stories, spiritual songs, or scripture. The material selected, he tells us, should be chosen because it expresses the religious experiences that the child has already had. He did not confine the development of the religious life to these materials but believed that all of his play materials and games would bring the child to the realization of spiritual truths.

Method in the Kindergarten. Froebel's method rests back upon his conception of the child and upon his theory in regard to the development of all things. Since the child is in essence good, since he has enfolded within him in germ form all that he is ever to be or become, and since the divine essence enfolded within is ever seeking to realize itself, it is the task of the teacher to provide a suitable environment in which the child may realize his divine essence through self-activity. Froebel would have the child learn not so much by means of impression as by expression. In his Kindergarten he sought "to give the child experience rather than instruction, and to educate him by action rather than by books."¹ Froebel's observation of children revealed to him that the child gains his impressions through sensory experiences and manifests his inborn desire for activity in

¹ Bowen, H. C. op. cit., p. 103.
the form of play. "Nature seemed to say to him plainly, almost audibly: 'I educate children by play. If you wish to educate children as I do, encourage and organize their play.'"\(^1\) The realization of this led Froebel to originate and to organize the play materials mentioned in the previous section.

His method of using these play materials rests back upon his theory of development. Under the heading, "Content and Materials of the Kindergarten," it was shown that his belief in a parallelism between all instances of development resulted in a system of materials which, Froebel believed, followed the order of development of the child, and which, if used in the right way, would result in the unfolding of that which was in germ form in the child. This made necessary not only the use of the whole system according to the order worked out by Froebel, but the use of each "gift" according to a special sequence. In addition, Froebel tells us "that in each total product all the material of the gift shall be used."\(^2\) In doing this he claims "the underlying unity is made visibly apparent."\(^3\) Each form, likewise, should be the outgrowth of a preceding form. "No form should be completely destroyed."\(^4\) He claims that "it is quite important for the child, and it greatly pleases him, to notice how one object springs from another; for example, a table into a table and

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1 Ibid., p. 101.
4 Froebel, F. op. cit., p. 224.
two benches; these into four benches, etc. The anticipation of a certain necessary inner coherence in the thing, whether it be in its form or purpose—this manifold perception of a certain inner life throughout—not only awakens, but fosters and forms the life of the child. Isolation and exclusion destroy life; union and participation create life.¹

Each gift, beginning with the third, Froebel would have used in three different ways: to make "forms of life," "forms of beauty," and "forms of knowledge." Forms of life are representations of things in social life, such as table, chair, desk. Beauty forms are arrangements of materials to form conventional designs. Knowledge forms are arrangements of materials to teach mathematical and geometric facts. Within each of these different ways Froebel would have a definite sequence followed.

Since nothing, according to Froebel, can be known unless it is connected with its opposite, his "law of opposites" is an important method in the use of his series of gifts. He tells us, "The fundamental law of all advance, development, and cultivation (thus, in general, of all education) is to proceed from any given thing to the pure opposite within this given thing."² This is used particularly in the making of the forms of beauty. These forms are usually symmetric around a center. The blocks are placed in pairs on "opposite" sides of the center. Froebel is more interested in the symbolic

¹ Ibid., p. 180.
² Kilpatrick, Wm. op. cit., p. 43.
result in the life of the child which, he believes, this method brings about than in the form produced. He believes this method is as important for the "heart and soul culture of the child as the absorption of light and color through the day, and the inhalation of air from the atmosphere."¹

The above indicates to some degree the complicated system of materials and method that Froebel worked out and the symbolic meanings that he shot through it all. That the method of dictation is inevitable in carrying out this system is quite obvious. All, however, he would have done in a spirit of play, songs often accompanying the activities.

In the use of his games he is more flexible than in the use of his "gifts." Although he speaks of the "inner spirit"² and the "inmost deepest meaning"³ of the games, and of the games as "a closely connected whole depending upon necessary laws,"⁴ nevertheless he says that it is not needful "to follow the games as given in the series. This would quite destroy that fresh merry life which should animate the games."⁵

Nature study in Froebel's Kindergarten was not analytical but appreciative. It was a real life activity. Appreciation was developed and observations were made through the planting and care of real out-door gardens, through the care of plants within the building, and through nature walks.

¹ Froebel, F. Pedagogics of the Kindergarten. New York, 1898, p. 190.
³ Ibid., p. 83.
⁴ Ibid., p. 83.
⁵ Ibid., p. 85.
Likewise the children were expected to care for animals. Both activities - the observation and care of plants and animals - were to be enhanced by the playing of games.¹

Stories were told in connection with pictures, the use of the gifts, and in connection with the nature activities. Monroe tells us, "The story, when told by the teacher, was to be expressed by the child, not only in his own language, but through song, or gesture, or pictures, or construction of simple articles from paper, clay, or other convenient material."²

The question and answer method was not omitted. It was used in connection with the stories, pictures, and gifts; for example:

"What does the sphere do?" "It dances."
"But what does the sphere do now?" "It swings."
"Who dances?" "Who swings?"³

His use of this method, however, did not descend to the catechetical variety.

Froebel advocates an indirect method for the development of the religious and moral life of the child in the Kindergarten. Not through the memorization of religious dogma, not through precepts and bribes did Froebel aim to develop the religious and moral life of the child but through the experiencing of religious and moral truths and through doing. He did not discard memorization but said that songs, verses,

¹ Bowen, W. C. op. cit., pp. 150, 151.
³ Froebel, F. Pedagogics of the Kindergarten. New York, 1898, p. 75.
and prayers of a religious nature should be taught the child only after the religious feelings and sentiments which they express had welled up in the child's soul.\(^1\) The beginnings of religious feeling, he tells us, are found in the feeling of community and love as expressed in family life. He would have this carried over into the Kindergarten. Through the experiencing of human love, through contact and communion with nature, through his system of plays and games, through acquaintance with Jesus, the greatest lover of children, he felt that the child would come into true union with God in sentiment, thought, and action.

Action is the other important factor in the development of the child's religious and moral life. He tells us, "Religion without work runs the risk of empty dreaming, passing enthusiasm, and an evanescent phantom."\(^2\) Baroness von Marenholtz - Bulow, who has done much to interpret the teachings of Froebel, writes on this point:

"All work, all exercises which awaken the active powers, which form the capacity for rendering loving services to fellow-creatures, will help to lay the groundwork of religion in the child. The awakening of love goes before that of faith; he who does not love cannot believe, for it is love that discovers to us the object or the being worthy of our faith. Loving self-surrender to what is higher than ourselves, to the highest of all, is the beginning of faith. But love must show itself in deeds, and this will be impossible unless there be the ability to do. A child can no more be educated to a life of religion and faith without the exercise of personal activity than heroic deeds can be accomplished by words only."\(^3\)

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1 Froebel, F. Education of Man. New York, 1890, p. 251.
2 Bowen, H. C. op. cit., p. 118.
3 Ibid., p. 120.
Froebel would not have a child suspected of evil. The child's goodness is to be presupposed by the kindergarten teacher until the contrary is clearly manifested. Any suspicion on the part of the teacher renders the child powerless to act, and it is only in action that the good is developed. Froebel, therefore, would starve evil or any tendency toward evil, and develop the good through activity. He would not have the kindergarten teacher be the old, rigid disciplinarian who seeks to drive evil out of the child by means of punishment, but he would have her be a guide who seeks to direct the activity of the child along the right paths. Punishment and severity, he says, should take the place of positive suggestion and admonition only when these methods had failed.1

When the intricate details of Froebel's method and his symbolism are sloughed off, his method of dealing with the child in the Kindergarten stands out as one characterized by expression rather than impression. This expression he would have take place through gesture, song, games, constructive activities, language, and through association and cooperation with other children. All of this expression he would have brought about in the way which is most natural to the child—play. The teacher in Froebel's Kindergarten is not one who pours in facts and drives out evil, but one who guides the natural activity of the child along constructive lines.

A discussion of the Kindergarten in terms of purpose,

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1 Froebel, F. Education of Man. New York, 1890, p. 250.
place, materials, and methods makes it difficult to see such an institution actually at work. Baroness von Harmsoltz-Bulow's description of a Kindergarten, as written up by Bowen, helps us to see the way in which the activities in a Froebelian Kindergarten were carried on.

"The pleasant sound of children's voices singing falls on the ear of the visitor as he enters the kindergarten; and in an open-air space shaded with trees (or in winter in a large, pleasantly warmed room) he sees a ring of little children from three to five or six years of age, led by the kindergarten teacher, and moving in rhythmic measures round one of their little comrades who is going through an energetic course of gesticulations and movements, which the others imitate while they sing. The movements may represent the incidents of husbandry and harvesting, or the way in which birds build their nests, and fly out and home again, or scenes in the market or the shop. The actions are suited to the words and the words to the actions, and mutually explain one another. Physical and mental exercises go on together. The movements exercise the limbs and muscles, the music helps to call into activity the feelings and the imagination, the words and the actions rouse the mind to observation, and the will is called into play by the desire and the effort to imitate. A little farther on in the garden under an awning will be seen tables, at each of which are seated some ten children,---some, perhaps, as old as eight---working away busily. At one table strips of colored paper, straw, or leather are being plaited into all sorts of pretty patterns to make letter-cases, mats, etc. The patterns of the elder children are their own invention, and their little productions are destined to be presents to father and mother, brothers and sisters, and friends. At the next table building with cubes, or bricks, has been going on. Before each child stands a structure of his own planning, and all are listening attentively to the story the teacher is telling, in which each of the objects built is made to play a part. Or the children may have been counting, and comparing the sizes and shapes of the bricks. At a third table paper is being folded into all sorts of shapes, representing tools of different kinds, boxes, boats, and even flowers. Most of
The forms which the children produce are arrived at by gradual transitions from some fundamental mathematical form, and thus first notions of the elements of geometry are acquired, not through abstract teaching, but by observation and original construction. But the half-hour is at an end, and there must be no more sitting still. Spades, rakes, and watering-pots are now brought out for work in the flower-beds (or, when indoors, in flower-boxes or pots), of which each child has one of its own. Vegetables, and sometimes fruit, as well as flowers, are cultivated by the little people in these small patches of ground; but in the general garden, which is in the common charge of all the children, are grown corn, field products, and the like. In this garden, too, many kinds of animals are kept,—rabbits, goats, dogs, chickens, pigeons,—which have all to be looked after and cared for. The little ones whom we first saw engaged in their childish gymnastics now come running up to the table deserted by the elder children, and in their turn take their seats, and begin laying together and interlacing little laths or sticks in symmetrical shapes,—forms of beauty, forms of knowledge or mathematical figures, forms of practical life, or buildings, tools and the like,—a sort of drawing with concrete lines. The results of many of the occupations are to be stored up in the glass cupboard in the playroom. They are not all for birthday or Christmas presents. A great many of them are to go into a common fund by means of which a Christmas tree is to be dressed, and the poor children of the neighborhood are to come and join in the general rejoicing,—they are, indeed, to be the special guests. And now the working-hours are ended, and a song, in which all join, sounds through the kindergarten. The little ones with their teachers form a circle and sing, with childish reverence, words expressing gratitude to God and desire to please him and their parents. The kindergarten always opens and closes in this way. Three, or perhaps four, hours have thus passed quickly away for the little people, and now they hurry off to join the mothers or sisters or nurses who have come to fetch them, eager to tell of all the pleasures and work of the morning, and to carry on by themselves at home the arts they have been learning.\footnote{Bowen, H. C. op. cit., pp. 103-106.}
V. "The Mother School" of Comenius Compared with the "Kindergarten" of Froebel.

Before a comparison of the materials, methods, and general character of Comenius' "Mother School" with those of Froebel's "Kindergarten" is made, let us compare their concepts of the child for whom their schools were planned. Bowen says, "With all his enthusiasm for education and his desire to found it on a scientific basis, Comenius had had but little scientific knowledge of child-nature, and troubled himself not at all to acquire it." In another place he tells us that educators need to give mothers and workers with little children "an A B C of sensations and emotions" and that it is here "that the genius of Froebel is most at home and most original."

A. Conception of the Child.

According to Comenius the child lives a threefold life; his vegetative life is perfect in the womb, his animal life on earth, and his intellectual or spiritual life in heaven. Froebel likewise attributes a threefold nature to the child; his body connects him with nature, his heart and mind with humanity, and his very "essence" with God in whom he lives and moves and has his being. Because Froebel placed the human side of life on such a high level, he centered his attention on life in this world more than did Comenius.

Both educators speak of the children of man as children of God, as beings created in His image. Because of this,

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1 Bowen, H. C. op. cit., p. 2.
2 Ibid., p. 5.
Comenius tells us that the child is able to acquire knowledge of all things; his mind is like a seed in which the plant or tree actually exists, "although its image cannot be seen."

In this he is somewhat of a forerunner of Froebel who claims that the child has enfolded within him in a certain order all that he is ever to be and become; that man with all of his talents and the unity of his nature is in the child at birth.1 To both Comenius and Froebel the child is something other than a vacuum; he has within that which makes development possible.

Comenius had no system of psychology on which to base his conception of the child or of the development of the child; he simply studied plant and animal life and applied the laws discovered there to the development of all child-life. While Froebel believed in a basic law of development for all of God's creation, he believed that each part of creation develops in accordance with special laws which are manifestations of the one universal law; that is, humanity, though subject to the one great law, has laws of development which are different from those governing plant life. Although Froebel believed that the instincts and tendencies of life develop in each child in the same general order in which they develop in humanity as a whole, he insists that each child is an individuality and passes through these phases of human development in his own special manner. Comenius' conception placed child-life on a level which was far above that of his

1 See pp. 14, 19, 43, 49.
time, but it is to Froebel that a respect for the individuality of the child must be traced.\(^1\)

The thought of the total-depravity of the child, which was still prevalent in the time of Comenius, was not accepted by him in its totality; he believed that the child, though subject to original sin, has within him "seeds" of goodness. Froebel discarded completely the doctrine of total-depravity and claims that the child, like the rest of nature, is in its elements good. But Nature, he says, seldom shows itself in its original purity in man; the child, therefore, is liable to error. Nevertheless, he would have us presuppose the child's goodness until the contrary is clearly manifest, in order that the original state, where it is still found intact, might not be destroyed.\(^2\)

The senses are considered by Comenius the main guides of childhood, since the child is still incapable of "abstract contemplation." Froebel speaks of them as the means by which the child may come to know the outside world. To both, the senses are considered as avenues by which the child may gain experience.\(^3\)

To Comenius activity is an outstanding characteristic of the child. His belief that the mind of the child is like wax which hardens with age places a different interpretation upon his conception of activity from that of Froebel to whom the mind of the child is not so much possessed of activity as

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\(^1\) See pp. 16, 17, 43, 50.
\(^2\) See pp. 14, 50.
\(^3\) See pp. 19, 51.
It is activity. Both saw in the child the tendency to imitate. Because of this Comenius placed great emphasis upon adult example. Froebel speaks of imitation as a by-product of the child's self-active mind and places less value upon it than upon the child's creative power.¹

Although Comenius mentions the educational value of association with other children, it was left to Froebel to give to the world the conception of the child as a real social being. In two other points Froebel goes beyond Comenius; he speaks of the child's power of imagination which makes it possible for the child to attribute life to all things, and he pictures the child as an emotional being whose emotions need nourishment and guidance.²

B. Place and Teacher.

Comenius would have the education and development of these little children, from birth to about the age of six, take place in the home; he recommends that a place be provided in connection with the home where the children may run about and play in safety with the mother as teacher. Froebel advocates having the children, from the earliest possible age until six or seven years old, meet together in an institution known as the Kindergarten, where they may work and play during the morning hours. In mild weather he would have this work and play take place out of doors and in winter in a large pleasant room equipped for the purpose. To guide and develop these children Froebel would have women and young

¹ See pp. 19, 51.
² See pp. 51, 52.
girls who had been trained for this specific purpose. Neither educator insists upon a set chronological age-range but says that advancement should depend upon the development of the child.

Comenius would not have the child delivered to the schools at an early age because he believed the work of the schools was too difficult for the mind of the child. He knew only the set, formal schools of his day, and, unlike Froebel, did not conceive of an institution where the activities and materials might be suited to the child's development. With the old type of school in mind Comenius could not imagine a teacher having sufficient time to give the amount of attention and care which is required for a child of this age. Froebel, on the other hand, felt that the mother had not the time, apparatus, or trained skill to conduct properly the playful work with children. He tells us in one of his letters that it is the function of the teachers of little children "to be, to attain and to give, for the children's benefit, that which the mothers, even with the best will in the world, can neither be, attain, nor give."¹

Comenius hints at the kindergarten idea when he speaks of the home, in which children are growing and developing in the right way, as a "Garden."² He seems to be forecasting an institution such as Froebel's when he tells us that "children of about the same age, and of equal progress and manners and habits" learn much from each other in play.³

² See p. 19
³ See p. 21.
Froebel, recognizing the social nature of children and, like Comenius, recognizing the educational value of their playing together, went a step beyond and established institutions in which proper guidance would make this play-life of greater educational value. In one of his letters he writes, "Since children to a quite peculiar degree educate one another, mutually, if meeting together for associated play, under proper guidance and suggestive influence, we... need establishments for training quite young children, in their first stage of educational development."¹

C. Purpose of Early Education.

For both Comenius and Froebel the ultimate aim of education is religious. Comenius tells us that the ultimate end of man lies beyond this life, and he hopes through education to bring about everlasting happiness with God; Froebel tells us that the ultimate aim of education is union with God in "sentiment, thought and action." While Comenius thought of education as a social-regenerating force, he stressed the life beyond more than Froebel who believed that union with God and an expression of that union in "religious-mindedness" and "religious-minded industry" could be attained even in this world.²

Because of their conceptions of man, neither educator thought of education as a pouring-in process but as a process

² See pp. 20, 50, 51.
of development. Comenius would endeavor to bring to maturity the "seeds" of learning, virtue, and piety implanted in man; Froebel would seek to unfold the "divine essence" in man, lift it into consciousness, and raise man himself into "free, conscious obedience to the divine principle that lives in him, and to a free representation of this principle in his life."¹

In their aims both Comenius and Froebel minimize knowledge for its own sake. Comenius would have the individual come to know all things, not merely for the knowing, but in order that he might become wise in mind, prudent in action, and pious in spirit. Froebel would lead the individual to a knowledge of self and man in general, and to a knowledge of God and nature in order that he might live a pure and holy life.²

Although Comenius did not aim at knowledge for its own sake, the statement of his aims for his "Mother School" is more material-centered than the statement of aims given by Froebel for his "Kindergarten." Comenius' pansophic ideal naturally caused him to center his attention on factual material. He saw the whole field of knowledge before him and aimed to give something of this entire field at each stage of the child's development. Consequently he speaks of giving the child a knowledge of natural things, optics, astronomy, geography, chronology, history, economics, and politics. Froebel's interest in the laws of the origin and development of life centered his attention on an understanding of the laws that underlie all organic formation, the laws

¹ See pp. 15, 44. ² See pp. 15, 44.
that apply to himself, and finally to gain a realization that all of these laws are manifestations of one great law.\(^1\)

Both educators saw the child as an active being. Again Comenius' aims are expressed in a more material-centered way than those of Froebel. Comenius would have the child take part in dialectics, counting, singing, and activities of the hand. Froebel, like Comenius, was interested in counting, singing, and activities of the hand, but he did not center his attention on these as his goals. His aims are more child-centered; he would give the child employment in keeping with his whole nature, that is, to strengthen his body, exercise his senses, and engage his awakening mind. He would endeavor to make all activity an expression of the mind; the senses would be exercised as organs of the mind. Through all of this activity he hoped to help the child understand his own life, to enlarge the child's sympathies, to guide aright his affections, and to help him come into harmony with others, with nature, and with God.\(^2\)

Since the ultimate aims of both Comenius and Froebel are religious, the subject of purpose is incomplete without a discussion of their more specific aims on this point. Comenius would have the child come to know God as One who is present everywhere and sees all; as One who bestows good things on all who obey him; as One who punishes with death those who disobey him; as One who must be feared, obeyed, invoked and loved; and finally, as One who will take him to

\(^1\) See pp. 22, 57.
\(^2\) See pp. 25, 54, 56.
heaven if he has been good. In contrast with this Froebel would have the child come to know God as the Creator of the world of nature and of his own life; as the Sustainer of the universe, One in whom all things live and move and have their being; as One who accompanies him in all of his life "with fatherly loving protection and help." He would have him come into union with God through communion with nature, through association with people and an experiencing of their love, and through acquaintance with Jesus, the greatest lover of children. Froebel did not aim to frighten the child into goodness by precepts or to urge him on by bribes. He sought to bring the child to the moral life through the starving of evil tendencies and the developing of the good in him, and to bring him to a realization of the great truths of religion through an experiencing of those truths in his own life.  

D. Content and Materials.

Comenius visualized a whole universe of knowledge divided into various subjects. He felt that each person should in his life-time come to know the principles, causes, and uses of all the most important things in existence. To accomplish this vast aim he would have taught, even in early childhood, a portion of each of the subjects of education. Froebel saw before him a vast universe in which were human beings, plants, animals, minerals --- all created by God, all

1 Bowen, H. E. op. cit., p. 118.
2 See pp. 21, 22, 55, 56.
controlled by special laws which he believed were manifestations of one universal law of development. For this reason Froebel saw an interconnectedness in the whole field of education. The division of this field into separate subjects seemed artificial to him; he saw it as a continuous, connected whole, each part related to every other part and each helping to advance every other part. He was more interested in helping the child gain an understanding of the inner meaning of things and an understanding of the underlying laws of development than in helping him merely in the acquisition of a knowledge of so much factual material.  

What should be taught in these early years, Comenius tells us, must be determined by the course of nature, that is, the simple should precede the complex, the general come before the particular. What should be taught must likewise be determined by the development and natural bent of the child; nothing should be taught except when it can be understood; nothing should be taught to which the natural bent of the intellect does not incline it. Finally, the choice of content and materials he would have determined by the child's environment; the choice should proceed from the near to the remote, from the known to the unknown. Froebel tells us, likewise, that the content and materials of instruction should be selected from the surrounding life of the child as it comes within his experience. The interests and mental needs of the child were also determining factors for him.

1 See pp. 16,46.
believing that the child and inorganic things follow the same general order of development Froebel looked upon these external things as materials of instruction which naturally satisfy the mental needs of the child.  

This belief of Froebel's, that the external things of the universe are symbols by which the child comes to understand great truths, is basic to the series of gifts he developed. Such a symbolic system Comenius did not build up, but he does advocate the use of toys and materials with which the child may construct things. Comenius merely suggests various things that a mother may provide; Froebel worked out a definite, carefully planned system of materials which, he tells us, is indispensable to kindergarten teachers in their work with little children.

Both Comenius and Froebel advocate a joyous development of the musical life of the child. Comenius would have the child join in the adult hymns of praise; Froebel wrote songs in which he sought to make both the words and music in keeping with the interests and development of the child.

Comenius advises mothers to use pictures with their children. Froebel put artists to work on the actual creation of pictures dealing with the life of the times. These he felt were suited to the interests and development of the kindergarten child.

Comenius recommends that mothers use stories - apologues,

1 See pp. 17, 46, 57, 58.  2 See pp. 25, 26, 58, 61.  3 See pp. 25, 63, 64.  4 See pp. 24, 64.
animal stories, and fables — with their children. Froebel likewise urges mothers and kindergarten teachers to tell stories to their children. He recommends legends, fables, fairy-tales, and stories related to incidents in daily life, nature stories, and stories with a seasonal emphasis. Many of these are of his own creation and are connected with his pictures.¹

Both educators recommend a knowledge and understanding of natural things. Not only do they agree in this respect, but they agree that the study should deal with things in the child's immediate surroundings, such as, people, animals, birds, fruits, plants, and table vegetables. The study should proceed from these common things which are close at hand to things farther away.²

Comenius suggests the use of childish poetry which has both rhythm and rhyme. He would have the children not only hear and enjoy these but learn them as well. Froebel also would give the child the opportunity of expressing his feelings through this means. His poems, he believed, would help to impart life to the objects of nature and give the child an opportunity of expressing the deeper meaning of things which well up within his soul.³

While Comenius shows an interest in the physical welfare of children and encourages mothers to play with their children, it was left to Froebel to watch children at play and to work

¹ See pp. 25, 65.
² See pp. 23, 24, 64.
³ See pp. 25, 65, 66.
out games which are in keeping with their interests. These games are not only of recreational value but of educational value as well; through them both physical and social development is made possible.¹

Although Comenius tells us that nothing should be taught unless it can be understood by the child, he includes among his materials for the development of the religious life of the young child the Lord's prayer, the Apostle's Creed, and the Ten Commandments. Froebel does not exclude the memorization of Scripture and spiritual songs but insists that only that material should be selected which expresses the religious experiences that the child has already had. Such songs and passages of Scripture will come then, he says, as an expression of that which has already been awakened in the child's soul.²

Both Comenius and Froebel agree that the content and materials for the development of the young child should be in accordance with his interests, development, and surroundings. Comenius encouraged the mothers of his day to use materials which Froebel, almost two centuries later, not only advised the use of but abundantly supplied.

E. Method.

Because of Comenius' belief that the seeds of learning, virtue, and piety are within the child, education to him became more than a pouring-in process; it became a process of

¹ See pp. 27, 61, 62. ² See pp. 26, 66.
development. The child, he would say, needs only the right conditions to cause the seeds of learning, virtue, and piety to burst into bloom. Because of Froebel's belief that the divine essence is unfolded within the child, that all he is ever to be or become is there in germ form, education became to him also a process of development. The child, he would say, needs a suitable environment in which to realize his divine essence. Because each believed the child is something other than a vacuum when he comes into the world, each pictures education as a process of development.¹

Education should follow the way of nature, Comenius tells us; learning should come as naturally to the child as swimming to fish. Having no psychology on which to base his methods for his "Mother School", Comenius resorted to analogies from nature; many of his educational laws were the direct result of his observations of bird-life. Froebel also said that education should follow the way of Nature. He believed, however, that each thing develops in accordance with special laws which are manifestations of one fundamental law of development. Because of his belief in special development not only of humanity but of the individual, Froebel turned his attention to the study of the child for the formulation of his educational laws.²

Discovering that the mind of the child is characterized by activity, Froebel concluded that education which follows the way of nature is one of self-activity, one in which

¹ See pp. 17, 66. ² See pp. 16, 17, 50, 66.
expression rather than impression predominates. Since to Froebel this active mind was enfolded within it in germ form all that it is ever to be or become, since it is ever seeking to express itself, since external things help in this unfolding, and since the senses are the connecting avenues between these external things and the mind, he would have the senses exercised as organs of the mind. Activity then which makes possible sensory experiences is necessary in order that the idea germs may unfold. Although Comenius drew his educational laws from the realm of nature in general, he did not fail to see the child as an active being. He, too, speaks of the senses as outstanding means for educating little children and encourages mothers to give their children first-hand experience. He utilized the senses more as a means of impression than a means of unfolding that which is within.¹

The way in which the child manifests his activity, Froebel discovered, is in play. Since play is the way of Nature in the development of the child, Froebel sought to use it to good advantage in his Kindergarten. The value of play as an educational method with little children was not overlooked by Comenius. He tells us that comprehension should be gained "spontaneously and imperceptibly in play," and that parents should play with their children. To utilize the child's self-active nature, to utilize his desire to play Froebel devised play materials in connection with which the child might express himself through song, gesture, games, constructive activities, and language. Because of his belief

¹ See pp. 23, 24, 27, 66, 67.
In the parallelism of all development and because of his law of opposites, Froebel tells us that these gifts for play must be used in a certain order and in special ways. Comenius, who was not fettered by Froebel's symbolic ideas, has neither a set system of play materials nor prescribed rules for the use of those toys and constructive materials which he does suggest. ¹

Froebel looked upon all materials as a means of awakening the natural activity of the mind. He thought even of stories, not so much as a method of pouring-in, but as a means of unfolding the power of life germinating within the child. He tells us that songs and verses should be taught as materials of expression; nothing should be taught until the child has experienced that which the material suggests. While Comenius recommends stories, he does not tell us how he would have them used. He suggests materials to be memorized in which the thoughts are so advanced that no child could ever have experienced them. Froebel realized that after a child has had an experience it is easy for him to learn a song or verse expressing that experience. This is the way of appreciation, the way advocated by Froebel. Comenius leans toward the drill method; he prescribed the "whole" method for teaching some things and the "part" method for others. ²

Because Comenius saw the child as an imitator, he speaks of the power of example as an educational means. Froebel also saw the educational value of the natural imitation of right examples within the home, but he went even farther and helped

¹ See pp. 27, 66, 67, 72. ² See pp. 25, 29, 70, 71.
the child gain right habits, and an appreciation of plant, animal, and human life through the utilization of imitation in games. Both used the question and answer method but neither descended to the old catechetical variety.

Froebel would not have education in the kindergarten be categorical and interfering, but following and guiding. Since he believed that children are in their elements good, and that they must be looked upon in that light until proven otherwise, he advised the use of punishment and severity as a last resort. The teacher then, according to Froebel's ideal, is a guide who sets the "stage," permits the child freedom in expressing himself, and interferes only when the child shows a need for help or correction. In practice Froebel tended more toward guidance, and his rules for the use of his "gifts" made of the teacher more of a dictator than a guide. Comenius had no system to bind the child; as far as one is able to discover, free play under the guidance of a busy mother was the rule. Since Comenius believed that only the "seeds" of goodness are within the child, his method of discipline was more interfering than that of Froebel; in his School of Infancy he urges mothers to resort early in life to the use of admonition, threat, and even the use of the rod.

While Comenius and Froebel differ in many minor points on method, they agree in their major propositions. For both the method of education with young children should be a natural and pleasant process. It should be a matter of drawing-out

1 See pp. 27, 66, 67.
2 See pp. 28, 29, 72.
rather than pouring-in. Because the child's senses are keen and because the child is naturally active, his education should be brought about through sensory experiences and self-activity.
Friedrich Froebel, who lived during the first half of the nineteenth century and founded the Kindergarten, an institution for the development of the early life of the child, may never have read the educational works of Comenius, who lived practically two centuries before and was the first to show a real interest in the education of little children; nevertheless, in almost every important particular the basic teachings of both are similar. Even their early lives and the influence of those early experiences upon their interest in child-life and development show some similarity. Although Comenius had been deprived of both his parents in early life, he was old enough to have experienced the joy of their care and value of their guidance. Later in life he looked back at this period as an age of real educational opportunity, and he sought to awaken parents to a realization of its educational importance. Froebel also was practically deprived of both his parents early in life; that is, his mother's death when he was less than a year old, his father's lack of time and understanding of the child, and his step-mother's indifference made him virtually an orphan. His suffering during this period and his recall of this suffering in later life awakened in him a desire to save other children from experiences such as he had had.

Although Froebel did not begin his educational work with
the Kindergarten are well along in years, nevertheless the whole trend of his educational endeavors, even when he was at Pestalozzi's school, was in that direction. Comenius, engaged in the whole field of educational activity in addition to his episcopal duties, had not the time or background of theory to work out the detailed theory, materials, and practice of Froebel. Nevertheless, the root-ideas of Froebel's Kindergarten are to be found in Comenius' School of Infancy. In the respect of the two educators for early childhood, in their emphasis on its educational importance, in their utilization of the immediate environment, sense-experience, activity, and play in the education of little children, and in their insistence on the value of women as teachers for this age, both Comenius and Froebel are in agreement. Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler in comparing the two men and their work writes:

"Nor does it detract from the estimate to be put upon Froebel's teachings to say that in almost every important particular they were built upon foundations laid by the Moravian bishop. Froebel's exaggerated and absurd symbolism and his unbalanced religiosity, give a certain curious interest and stimulus to his doctrines, but add nothing to their force or permanent value. His seed-thought is again that of Comenius - educate by developing the pupil's own activity."  

1 Butler, Nicholas Murray. The Place of Comenius in the History of Education. Syracuse, 1892, pp. 18,19.
Summary

Comenius in the theory and practice of his Mother School agrees with Froebel in the theory and practice of his Kindergarten on the following points:

1. The children of men are children of God and should be respected and treated as such; they are not totally depraved.

2. The child is not a vacuum; he has within that which makes development possible.

3. Because the child has within him the basis for education, education is something other than a pouring-in process; it is a process of development.

4. This developmental process must be a pleasant one; to be pleasant it must follow the "way of Nature."

5. The "way of Nature" for the child is one of activity; the child learns easily and naturally if permitted to express himself.

6. The child naturally expresses his active nature in play and constructive activities; these should be given an important place in the education of the child.

7. The child's senses are keen and are avenues over which he gains experience. Opportunities for first-hand experience must be provided.

8. The child's advancement should not depend upon his chronological age but upon his development.
9. The ultimate aim of education is religious; knowledge is of value only as it leads to a pious, pure, and holy life and to fellowship with God.

10. The content and materials for the development of the young child should come out of the child's immediate environment and should be in keeping with his interests and development.

11. Plant and animal life, things with which the child may construct, songs, pictures, stories, poems, Scripture, and prayer are valuable materials for the development of child-life.

12. Women, particularly mothers, are by nature peculiarly suited to the work of educating little children.

While the root-ideas of Froebel's Kindergarten are likewise those of Comenius' Mother School, the two educators differ in the following ways:

1. Comenius looked upon the children in the Mother School as having within them "seeds" of goodness; Froebel looked upon the children of the Kindergarten as good in their very "essence."

2. Since the child to Froebel was good, he advised non-interference until the child had been proven otherwise. Comenius urged mothers to begin early in life the use of admonition, threat, and even the use of the rod.
3. Comenius believed that the life of the spirit is perfect in heaven; the child of the Mother School can make only a beginning along this line. Froebel believed that union with God is possible even for the kindergarten child.

4. The "way of Nature" in the Mother School was the way of the laws of plant and animal life; the "way of Nature" in the Kindergarten was the way of the laws of humanity and of the individual.

5. Comenius pictured God to the little children of his day as a sort of judge; Froebel pictured him for kindergarten children as a loving father with whom they could come into union.

6. Comenius centered his attention on the child's acquisition of factual material more than Froebel who aimed to give the child an understanding of the "inner meaning" of things and of the laws of life.

7. Froebel saw symbolic meanings in all the materials of education; Comenius was free from this absurd symbolism.

8. Froebel developed a set system of materials which he said must be used in a definite way; Comenius merely suggested materials that might be used and gave no set method for their use.

9. Comenius selected materials for memorization which were beyond the understanding of children. To teach these he had to resort to the drill technique. Froebel said only that should be taught which expresses experiences the child has had.
Comenius believed the education of little children should take place in the home with the mother as teacher. Each home was to be a mother school. Froebel believed children should come together in an institution for a few hours each day for work and play under the guidance of trained teachers.

Froebel goes beyond Comenius in the following:

1. He saw the child as a social being and utilized this for educational ends by bringing little children together for play and work.

2. He saw the child as an imaginative being and devised plays and games in which the child might use this power.

3. He saw the child as an emotional being and sought to develop this aspect of his life through proper nourishment and guidance.

4. He saw the unsuitability of many of the materials used in the education of children and created songs, games, pictures, and stories which he believed were adapted to the interests and understanding of little children.
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