

It was good to stand and realise the wonder and the truth of it.

The palace was thrown open to visitors, and everywhere the memory of the strong man dominated thought. It was a magnificent house, full of art treasures and of beauty, and coming into one quite simple and shabby little place we were shown the writing-table, with its primitive appliances, its little white pot candlestick, quill pens and letter-rack, where the great Chancellor worked, and where, it appeared, he committed as little as possible to paper the deeds he intended to do.

#### PESTALOZZI-FRÖBEL-HAUSES.

The home of the Fröbel Kindergarten system is undoubtedly one of the sights of Berlin. Therefore, when the invitation came to visit it, on Tuesday, a large number of the visitors accepted it.

Situated at the west-end of Berlin, in what one supposes is a poor quarter—although one could not tell that by the ordinary signs of squalid houses and narrow dirty streets, the only sign being the number of poorly-dressed children about—are a couple of red-brick buildings, with a charming garden containing many silver birches, and this is where the Kindergarten system, which is now so extensively employed for teaching young children, was first practised.

We were most cordially welcomed, and on mentioning our nationality were told, "We are so pleased to see the English here." The lovely gardens were cool and shady, the lawns were dotted over with clusters of ladies in smart costumes, and fitting hither and thither carrying food and refreshment were the students who were in training. The tables were gay and bright, and were covered with the beautiful damask so dear to the heart of every good housewife, German or otherwise. Flowers were there in profusion, in vases and scattered in beautiful array over the tables. Nor were they the only decorations; cakes, both good to look at and delicious to taste, strawberries and cream, and—oh! so welcome on such a hot day—ices and iced drinks, besides many other good things too numerous to mention, the general opinion being that German hospitality is most lavish.

Then came a visit to the Home; on entering, two wee children presented each visitor with a rose. Then, after signing the visitors' book, we saw the rooms where the babies are taught. Each "Auntie," as the teachers are called, has charge of twelve children; it is one of the important points of the system that the children shall be of different ages—from four to six years, for example—rather like a family party. Then according to their ages they are taught; nothing is theoretical, all is action. In teaching about the wind, for instance, they wash their dolls' clothes, they hang them out to dry, the *wind* dries them. They make little windmills also, and blow them to make them move. So with everything, and a happier, merrier set of children it would be hard to find. They are always busy, therefore good. They are taught, these wee things of three, four, and five years, to wash up their tea-things, to sweep, dust, tend flowers, birds, and fishes; when they are older they make butter and more difficult things, as well as learn to read and write. All their utensils are suitable for the age and size of the children using them. No forms are used, but wee chairs fastened together with strips of wood in sets of three, so there is plenty of air-space around each one. There was an exhibition of the

children's work, which included, besides sewing, knitting, and the ordinary things usually shown on such occasions, models of the rooms, the houses and grounds, models of things in wax and clay, all sorts and kinds of utensils in wood, polished brass, hand-made flowers, a little garden seat, pretty poker-work tables, and many, many other pretty and useful things impossible to enumerate. Besides all this there is a crèche, where the babies from the neighbourhood are brought day by day by their mothers who must needs go out to work for their living. When they come in they are taken straight to the bath-room and there tubbed, each one having its own numbered nail whereon hangs its little wash-cloth and towel; it is then dressed and put into a numbered bassinette perambulator. Its own clothes are sent away downstairs and kept in a warm airy place until evening.

The food is kept and prepared in a beautifully cool, well-ventilated room used for that purpose only. Each child has its own bottle, which is rather like a round graduated medicine bottle, with a soft rubber teat over the mouth.

There is also a cookery school built in the grounds, where the students learn cooking, and, judging by the excellent things given us for tea, they must be very well taught. The house can accommodate only forty indoor students; others come in daily, as do the children also. Much more might be written, but both time and space are limited.

#### A DELIGHTFUL AFTERNOON.

A very delightful afternoon was spent on Thursday, when a party of nurses went off, under the leadership of Fraulein Karl, to a country garden party given by Frau Hedwig Heyl. A special train was chartered to carry the numerous members of Congress to the places where the homes were situated of several ladies who had kindly arranged hospitality for us. Some descended at one station, others at another; we went to Neubabelsberg. On leaving the train we traversed a cool, shady lane to the steamboat; after embarking, we went for a delightful trip on the lake and then landed, and a short walk brought us to the house of our hostess. After quenching an intolerable thirst, there came a very urgent message from Frau Keyser, who had somehow been overlooked by the conductors of the crowds of visitors. The message ran:—"I invited many people, but no one has come; won't some come to me?" Who could resist such a message? So off we started at once to the little pier, and there found our hostess waiting for us in the steam yacht. Then we went on a lovely trip through the canal to the river, our hostess and her daughters pointing out the different places of interest we passed on the way.

On our return we were landed at the private landing-place, and, after more delicious refreshment, said adieu to our second hostess, much pleased with a delightful afternoon.

Those members of Congress who went to Grunewald had a very enjoyable time in the beautiful grounds of Frau Johanna Levy. Here the guests were received by the two little grand-daughters of their hostess, dressed in white, with knots of green and scarlet ribbon on their shoulders. With the charming manners of well-bred German maidens, they made their pretty curtesies to each guest. Their mother, in a pretty pale blue dress with a similar knot of ribbon, received the guests a

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)