

**THE DIARY OF A
FREE
KINDERGARTEN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649162147

The diary of a free kindergarten by Lileen Hardy

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LILEEN HARDY

**THE DIARY OF A
FREE
KINDERGARTEN**

THE DIARY OF
A FREE KINDERGARTEN

BY

LILEEN HARDY

With an Introduction by

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN

and Illustrations from

Photographs



UNIV OF
CALIFORNIA

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

1913

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INTRODUCTION

THE work of the Kindergarten in a half-forgotten corner of Edinburgh, like that in many another half-forgotten corner in Great Britain and America, is one that begets interest and sympathy in every understanding heart. It seems very small, so small that it is constantly overlooked, and its influence constantly minimised, but in reality it is big with promise and rich in results.

Here is a modest, unpretentious record of the daily life of one Kindergarten, who is doing her little best to make the world a better place in which to live. You can hear the mother heart beating in every simple paragraph, and see the spirit of the teacher and the gladness of the pupils on every touching page. This 'mothering' is sorely needed

by little creatures who grow up in homes where stern necessity provides a too-chilling atmosphere for the young plant. Do not think the attitude of the child-gardener sentimental, but believe it to be true that out of the heart come the issues of life.

I wish any word of mine might help to earn a little flood of golden sovereigns, and so this beautiful work be strengthened and developed.

'The hope of the world lies in the children.' The words were said dozens and dozens of years ago, and we have reiterated them so often that they sound hollow and perfunctory on our lips; yet they are as vital as they were yesterday, and they will be as vital to-morrow. S. Saviour's Child-Garden is one of the places where they 'come true' daily.

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN.

NEW YORK,
August 1912.

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November 1906.—S. Saviour's Child-Garden opened on All Saints' Day, 1906, with three children. A fourth should have come, but the mother misunderstood as to the date. I had said 'next Thursday' when it should have been 'Thurrrrsday firrrst.' Two out of the three were just the right kind of child to make the beginning easy—intelligent, friendly, talkative, and quite at home. Some of their remarks were very amusing. The eldest of the three informed the others that the beads they were threading 'were no' for keepin', but the wumman can keep them her ain sel'. They had some difficulty in picking up my name, and all the first day I was 'the wumman,' the second 'the wumman,' with the apology, 'I'm aye forgettin' your name.'