

**AIDS TO FAMILY
GOVERNMENT: OR, FROM
THE CRADLE TO THE SCHOOL,
ACCORDING TO FROEBE**

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Aids to Family Government: Or, from the Cradle to the School, According to Froebe by Bertha Meyer & M. L. Holbrook & Herbert Spencer

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BERTHA MEYER & M. L. HOLBROOK & HERBERT SPENCER

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FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

AIDS TO
FAMILY GOVERNMENT;
OR,
FROM THE CRADLE TO THE SCHOOL,
ACCORDING TO FROEBEL.
By BERTHA MEYER.
TRANSLATED FROM THE SECOND GERMAN EDITION BY
M. L. HOLBROOK, M.D.
TO WHICH HAS BEEN ADDED AN ESSAY ON
THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN
AND
THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF FAMILY GOVERNMENT,
By HERBERT SPENCER.

Motto. "COME, LET US FOR OUR CHILDREN LIVE."

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1879.

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1879.

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FROM THE
CRADLE TO THE SCHOOL.

CHAPTER I.

BEGINNING OF EDUCATION.

I.

THE last century has rightly been called that of humanitarianism, of idealism,—the present that of realism. The humanitarianism of the last century degenerated into sentimentalism, while the realism of our century has degenerated into materialism. The two centuries, however, do not stand in absolute contrast with each other, and our own is not to be regarded as wholly destitute of the higher sentiments. What the idealism of the previous century thought to gain by violent and revolutionary means, the realism of our day is gaining by patient and practical effort, disturbed, indeed, now and then, by volcanic irruptions, but ever with restless energy renewing the work and destined to reap, in due time, its full fruition.

In the methods of our age the exactness of modern science is combined with the idealism of the past, and what is thus attained should not be, as formerly, the exclusive monopoly of a learned class, but should become the com-

mon property of mankind. This is true humanitarianism. In it is found the justification of our social struggles and aspirations, and the common bond of union between the two centuries.

II.

Woman demands in our day, an increase of human rights, and she may well demand it. Prejudice and narrowness characterize all existing conditions in society, and especially do they circumscribe the sphere of woman. Her resistance to oppression is therefore justifiable, even if the means employed and at times the end sought are not always the best.

Those who are opposed to the enlargement of woman's sphere advance an argument that is clearly unphilosophical. "If," say they, "the right to enter into public life is granted to woman she will lose her taste for domestic duties and for the training of children." But the natural instincts of woman are too strong to be thus destroyed. Her demand should only be for that enlargement and that liberty to which nature and the conditions of her life impel her. Such freedom can never impair her love of home, or render her less devoted to the sacred duties of the wife and mother whenever these may devolve upon her. Above all should woman be guarded against the necessity of entering into a repulsive marriage for the sake of a home, because the means of an independent existence have been denied to her, and protected also should she be from the lonesomeness and neglect that are so often the lot of those who remain unmarried.

The right to choose her occupation should therefore be granted to woman. If her highest aspirations in life must remain unfulfilled, then let no social prejudice, no legal restriction, prevent her from seeking in another sphere that