

XXVII.

THE LIGHT-BIRD.

WE most do own what we own not,
But which is free to all.
The sunset light upon the sea, . . .
A passing strain of melody, -----
Are ours beyond recall.

The soul has many capacities, yet it is a single and indivisible unit. The child's first knowledge is a knowledge of his own being as an undifferentiated totality. It is of the utmost importance to his inner and outer development—and, indeed, to the whole course of his life—that his feeling of the unity of his being should be a strong and living one before he descends into the consciousness and culture of specific powers. The manifestations of infancy prove beyond dispute that the order of development is from the universal to the particular, and that all distinctions in thought and feeling arise through a process of specification.

How different are the motor activities from the activities of sense, yet how each reacts upon the other! Each one of our little plays has shown us either the recoil of movement upon sensation or the recoil of sensation upon movement. Even our very simple Play with the Limbs incited to



Lichtvöglein an der Wand.

„Die Mutter zu dem Kinde spricht:
„Mein Liebes Kind, vergiß es nicht,
Nicht Alles, was Du siehst,
Auch gleich zu greifen ist.““

Kind:

„Lieb Vögelein! Lieb Vögelein!
Lieb Vögelein an der Wand,
Halt mir doch einmal stand!
Laß Dich doch von mir greifen!
Mußt nicht umher so schweifen!
Lieb Vögelein an der Wand,
Halt mir doch einmal stand!“

activity the sense of sight, while conversely we learned from the song of The Boy and the Moon how the sensation of sight reacts upon the activity of body and limbs.

Not only is there a reaction between motor activity and the energy of sense, but the activity of one sense excites the activity of the other senses. The reaction of hearing upon sight will be evident to any one who will notice how much more strongly visible things appeal to the child when interpreted by word and tone. Hence the instinctive mother always links object and word, and clothes the word with a garment of song. On the other hand, vision reacts upon and incites to activity the organ of hearing. The original implicit unity of the different senses is further shown by the fact that what the baby sees and feels he also tries to taste, and everything his hands can grasp is promptly carried to his mouth.

Very early in the development of the child, however, the sense of sight asserts its supremacy. Sight is the regnant sense. It tests and orders the results of all the other senses. In the sense of sight the nature of man as a *seer* and discerner is symbolically declared. Hence you say to your child, “Through your dear eyes, my darling, I can look into your soul.” Hence also we demand of children that they shall use their eyes aright. We bid them “look before and around them.” We chide them for seeing and hearing nothing. Rising to higher analogies, we speak of the “healthy eye,” and of the single eye through