

gratification of the child's impulse to see everything in each object. The dangling ball now becomes many things, as a bird, a kitten, a dog,—“ See how birdie flies backwards and forwards,” “ Look how pussy jumps up on the bench,” “ Hop! doggie skips over the fence,” “ The chicken eats the corn,” “ The miner goes down the mine,” and so on. So from this one object the child in imagination forms many. Even though he has never seen them and they are not even part of his surroundings yet they are brought before him by words. For as a thinking and judging being man has always the power to perceive things dimly before he gets to know them. The ball, as the type of the self-contained, represents everything which can be thought and treated as a whole. Other objects doubtless can give the ideas of being, disappearing, returning, seeking, finding, fetching, grasping, holding, rolling, and so on, but none gives so great variety of movements as the ball. It is this which makes it so excellent a plaything. But what has been done with the ball may be attempted with other things, such as an apple, a ball of thread, a key, a nut, a flower. So will these objects be brought before the child in different actions and relations, and thus his development will be broadened. But amid all such variety the ball remains the unifying and explanatory plaything through which comes understanding.

When the child begins to crawl the ball is given him to play with as he will. He is placed on a rug on the floor, and a ball somewhat larger than those with which he has hitherto played may be suspended above him from the ceiling, and thus incite him to learn to stand, and so strengthen the muscles of hip and thigh. In this play the father may well take part.

The ball shows the child unity amid variety and the

vital connexion between them. It presents content, mass, matter, space, form, magnitude; it has elasticity and consequently is capable of rest and of motion, and is both independent and self-active. It partakes of the general characteristics of all bodies, for it has colour, weight, and gravitation, and is capable of producing sound. Through quicker movement on a shorter string and slower movement on a longer string, it opens the way to the most important phenomena and laws of nature. So the ball as a plaything connecting parent and child places man in the centre of the universe. And it is never too early so to place him, that he may rest consciously in unity with himself and in harmony with nature and with life. But the ball does more. It also early gives a central core to the child's own life.

It has been seen that games with the ball are valuable to the child in his three-fold aspect as a creating, feeling, and thinking, being. It may now be noted that another whole set of games may in a way be called *useful*, because they are obviously related to actual working life. Yet another may be styled *beautiful*, as having no reference to anything outside themselves, and satisfying by their own harmonious variety and completeness. A third set attracts the child by their *truth*, because through them certain relations, qualities, and connexions, are made explicit, each of which was already implicitly felt in his soul.

So we see that this first plaything of the child leads him in harmonious development towards the useful, the beautiful, and the true. Parents have thus an early opportunity of noticing towards which of these their child predominantly inclines and so of avoiding a one-sided development, even as life, art, and science are not mutually exclusive.

The games with the ball further develop the child's mental power. They practise him in perceiving and remembering; they awaken the capacity to compare, infer, judge, think; they foster the feelings; in them speech is cultivated. So man, even when a child, by games with the ball is placed in the centre of his own life and of all life.