

Mental Training before School Age

Mrs. Ivan F. Follitt, York Co., Ont.
In my article that appeared in Farm and Dairy a few weeks ago I dealt with what a child should be taught of its physical welfare before going to school. In this article I will deal with the mental side of the question.

Under the head of mental I have placed more fully that which relates to the child's studies. Some teachers prefer the child to come to them without any idea of real school work. Some parents prefer to send them

that way, but they are not supposed to be considered here. Definitely speaking, under the mental I have put number work, color, nature study, oral composition and in conjunction with all these, the training of the memory and the senses.

This can be easily done by the mother while she is at her every-day work. "How many eggs did daddy bring in to-day?" "Bring me up five or six apples for a pie, please." "There are too many potatoes here. Please take out a half dozen and bring in a dozen carrots with you." Thus the child is learning helpfulness and number work at the same time.

Color is just as easy. "What color are those curtains, Mary?" "Bring your tan stockings for me to darn!" Fruits, birds, flowers can all be brought into use in teaching color if we can't afford to have the colored balls, prisms, etc., used in the kindergarten.

When the child brings you in a bouquet, start your nature study going. True, it may be composed of weeds, but who needs to know weeds more than the country child? The little birds' nest found on the ground is an object of interest to them, and you can make it of educational value as well by having them note how and

of what it is made. The crow, the cricket, the cow and the pig can all lend their aid, for the simple things learned of every day objects now will help to increase the child's powers of observation later on.

Our little ones are very fond of playing a game that you might call for want of a better name—"What is it made of?" They go the whole list of known things almost from baby's high chair up to "old Bob." Their questions rather startle one sometimes, but as yet they are rather easily put off if a very satisfactory answer can't be given. Such a name we have found gives rise to a host of simple facts concerning wood, minerals, clothing, etc., and tends to make them think.

EVERY man has two educations—that which is given to him, and the other, that which he gives to himself. Of the two kinds, the latter is by far the most valuable. Indeed, all that is most worthy in a man, he must work out and conquer for himself. It is that, that constitutes our real and best nourishment. What we are merely taught, seldom nourishes the mind like that which we teach ourselves.—Richter.

Nature study, memory work and oral composition can be combined to good advantage. Take one of the common grains or seeds and have them tell you what happens to it from the time it enters the ground till it comes to the table. You will have to tell them first and they may frequently get the cart before the horse in their retelling, but it will serve a four-fold purpose: teach them of nature, train their memory; help them in their language lessons and impress upon their young minds the thought of how dependent we are upon God and one another.

Writing can scarcely be left off the list since Montessori in her system places it in the foremost ranks. By that system little Italian children of four learn to write all the letters in six weeks, and children of five in four weeks and write them well too. One strange point in this Italian method is that writing precedes reading. The children at first read what they themselves have written. Froebel, as far back as 1826, advocated this method also. Give a child a pencil, paper and a copy and even if he does seem to make very poor headway, he will at least learn something of holding a pencil, etc. Watch a young child trying to write for the first time and the importance of such practice will be easily recognized.

In all this the sensory nerves are being trained, but as a special ear training have them try to distinguish voices, footfalls, bells, etc. Drop nuts, beans, marbles, or pebbles on the floor or on glass and have them note differences in sounds. Stop him in his play and ask him to tell you the different sounds he hears. Practice will make him surprisingly proficient in this. Those who have studied the subject know that lack of proper ear training is frequently the cause of the heedlessness, inattentiveness and apparent disobedience of children. They hear, but not with intelligence; as we often say it goes in one ear and out the other. Teach the child to listen intelligently and who knows but what we will have helped solve the problem of discipline! Teach feeling by having the child with closed eyes tell which of several pieces of cloth is cotton, which woolen, which velvet, etc. The busy mother can think out games best suited to her own babies and circumstances. Such games make admirable ones for the "shut in" child.



Mr. Edison's Wonderful New Instrument

NEW! MASTER Instrument

Mr. Edison's Latest Invention

Just Out—The perfected musical wonder of the age.
And shipped on a stupendous special offer direct from us.

WRITE today for our new Edison Catalog—the catalog that tells you all about the wonderful new model Edison with Mr. Edison's new diamond point reproducer. It will also tell you about our new Edison offer! Now read:

Mr. Edison's Pet and



among all his wonderful inventions is his phonograph. He worked for years striving to produce the most perfect instrument. At last he has produced this new model. Think of it: over 25 years of work, on all the epoch-making inventions, then he gets and lovingly perfects!

Endless Fun

Happiness is life—and real happiness is found only in a real home where the happy and content family gather together for mutual enjoyment and recreation.



Such a variety of entertainment! Hear the latest up-to-date song hits of the big cities. Laugh over the latest streamer worth your face and your soul and hear from the fountain of funny minstrel shows. Hear the grand old church hymns, the musical comedy. Hear the pulsing organ, the crashing brass band, the orchestra, the two steps, the solo, duets and quartets. All will be yours with the Edison in your home. Send the coupon TODAY.

Free Loan Offer:

We will send you the new model Edison and your choice of all the brand new records on an absolutely free loan. Hear all the waltzes, two-steps, vaudivilles, minstrels, grand operas, old sacred hymns, every kind of comic and popular music, also your choice of the highest grade concerts and operas, as rendered by the world's greatest artists. Entertain your family and your friends. Then, when you are through with the outfit you may send it back at our expense.

Remember, not a penny down—no deposit—no guarantee—no C.O.D. No obligation to buy—a full free trial in your own home—direct from us—direct to you. Returnable at our expense or payable (if you want to keep it) at the actual rock-bottom price direct from us.

The Reason: Why should we make such an ultra-liberal offer? Well, we'll tell you—we are tremendously proud of this magnificent new instrument. When you get it in your town we know everybody will say that nothing like it has ever been heard—so wonderful, so grand, so beautiful, such a king of entertainers—we are pretty sure that at least some one, if not you, then somebody else, will want to buy one of these new style Edison especially as they are being offered now at the most astounding rock-bottom price and on easy terms as low as \$2.00 a month.

Our New Edison Catalog Sent Free!

Your name and address on a postal or in a letter, (or just the coupon) is enough. No obligations in asking for the catalog. Get this offer—while this offer lasts. Fill out the coupon today.

F. K. Babson, Edison Phonograph Distributors
Dept 7671 355 Putnam Ave., Waukegan, Illinois
U. S. Office, Edison Block, Chicago

To
F. K. BABSON
Edison Phonograph Distributors,
Dept 7671 355 Putnam Ave., Waukegan, Illinois
Gentlemen—Please send me your new Edison Catalog and full particulars of your free trial offer on the new model Edison Phonograph.

Name _____

Address _____