



HOW TO AMUSE CHILDREN IN WINTER.

"What a fretful child!" is a frequent complaint which we hear made by mothers and nurses, "I cannot think what to do with him; he is always whining." Whenever I hear this said, I think that the mother or the nurse does not take sufficiently into consideration that little children, even quite the wee ones of ten months or so, suffer as we do from ennui for want of something to do, and require to be either amused, or shown how to amuse themselves.

An excellent plan to to amuse quite tiny children is to keep a waste basket containing empty cotton-reels, bits of wood and stick, old curtain-rings, a string of buttons, a few shells, too large to go down the throat or up the nose, some stones, some empty match boxes, and various pieces of colored rag. Corks, or pill or tin boxes are very amusing to little children, and they prefer building towers of empty cotton-reels even to their bricks, for the delight of their falling down is more keen. The string of buttons, too, is useful in teaching to count. Of course, in keeping these things, it is necessary to be very careful that they are such articles as cannot do any harm to the little fingers, or to be easily swallowed; but an immense amount of amusement may be got out of such things at absolutely no cost whatever except that of a little time.

Pieces of colored rag are a source of great delight, and can be used either to dress up the little ones, or to wrap up their dolls. Old match boxes may be glued together, and made miniature chests of drawers.

Old post-cards give a great deal of pleasure. They can be folded lengthwise in half, and will stand on a flat surface one behind the other. When about fifty have been arranged, standing behind each other, give the last one a gentle push,

so that they will all fall in succession. A bundle of tangled wools of various colors is good to amuse tiny children, who can separate the different shades and sort them out. This, too, is a very good test for color-blindness, and cultivates the sense of color by teaching children to match. Threading beads is a very pleasant occupation, but children must be watched to see that they do not get them into their mouths. To watch any one cutting out paper dolls and paper chairs and tables is a very delightful amusement for the little ones, too, and if a pair blunt scissors is used, an elder child can do it to amuse the baby.

To make a scrap-book gives pleasant occupation to rather older children. Purchase some yards of unbleached calico at five cents per yard. One yard will fold into four leaves, the selvages being where the book opens, and the raw edges can be neatly hemmed or vandyked. Four yards will make a book of twelve leaves, including the two outer leaves, which form the cover. To strengthen the outer leaves paste two or three sheets of paper over them, and cover the whole with one large, or two or three small pictures. Christmas cards and old birthday cards can be pasted on to the remaining leaves, and children can arrange them without help, if provided with some paste and two or three small brushes. The books make nice presents to give away.

Nursery screens may also be made, and are very useful, saving the expense of a large screen. Cover a clothes-horse with unbleached calico, or better still, with dark glazed linen, and then paste on the cards. If calico is used, it should be covered entirely, but if colored linen is used, it may be allowed to show between the cards and make a nice border. This cannot be pressed as the books are, so soak all the cards with warm water be-