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Study Outlines
of
Elizabeth Harrison's "Child Nature"

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The benefits of education and of useful knowledge, generally diffused through a community, are essential to the preservation of a free government.

Sam Houston.

Cultivated mind is the guardian genius of democracy. . . . It is the only dictator that freemen acknowledge and the only security that freemen desire.

Mirabeau B. Lamar.

STUDY OUTLINES OF ELIZABETH HARRISON'S
"CHILD NATURE"¹

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LESSON I

SPONTANEOUS ACTIVITY AND ITS GUIDANCE

1. What is the relation between restlessness and physical growth? Pp. 13-14.

2. Describe the finger games. Why do they appeal so strongly to children? Give other games or devices of this character. Pp. 14-19.

3. What are the effects of parental guidance of activity into desirable lines as compared with efforts at the repression of undesirable actions? Pp. 19-29.

4. What are the changes of disposition which come with pubescence and early adolescence? Suggest ways of directing or correcting some of these tendencies. Give concrete experiences. Pp. 29-31.

5. Why should mothers study the line of thought which most attracts their children? Pp. 31-32.

6. "The real inner disposition of the child is neither moral nor immoral, but unmoral. It is made moral or immoral by our attitude towards it in the beginning of its unfoldment." Is the foregoing true? If true, what practical bearing has it for parents and primary teachers?

LESSON II

SENSE TRAINING

1. Summarize what was said in the last lesson concerning the spontaneous behavior of children and how our attitude affects it.

2. What are the three chief types of advantages to come from

¹Study of Child Nature, by Elizabeth Harrison, Chicago Kindergarten College, price \$1.00.

sense training? Can you name any particular benefit of importance which would not come under these headings? P. 33.

3. Show how our own pleasure is limited by our failure to perceive what is about us?

4. Show how the habit of observation may be developed out of a habit of contrasting. How may this be overemphasized?

5. How may the morals of a child be affected by training and practice in sense acuity? P. 37.

6. Show how the gratification of the senses is the most universal and dominating force of life. Pp. 39-44.

7. What is the "Tasting Song" and how is it employed? What will be the chief difficulties in using it? Pp. 49-54.

8. Discuss the habits of parents in using confectioneries as bribes, associating a child's sickness with what he has eaten, etc.

9. How should music, especially singing, be used in teaching children to consider others? How will this affect the child's own appreciation of music? Pp. 56-57.

10. "Let them alone
And they'll come home,
Wagging their tails behind them."

How would the lesson in this nursery rhyme apply to the matter of training of the senses?

LESSON III

EMOTIONS AND AFFECTIONS

1. Summarize what was said in last lesson on training the senses. Show how extreme emphasis upon sense training may lead to a wrong attitude in education and in life. Pp. 62-64.

2. Show how the peculiarities of various peoples are expressed in their toys. Pp. 65-70.

3. To what extent has the selection of toys for your children determined their characteristics?

4. How may we avoid wrong standards in selecting toys for children? Pp. 70-74.

5. State the several purposes that toys should serve. If this is true, then what advantages have a few simple, inexpensive dolls over a large number of fine dolls with great variety of dresses and equipment.

6. Show how play activity with toys is a training of the emotions along with the senses.

7. Show how selfishness is developed in children by their parents encouraging certain types of plays and playthings. Show how unselfishness may be developed through plays and playthings. Pp. 75-78.

8. The child's love for mother is more a matter of training than of teaching. How may this training be brought about? Pp. 78-79.

9. What person did you as a child love most, and why did you love this person? What does this show about child nature and about the best method of securing the love and confidence of children in such a way that you may guide them and mold their character.

LESSON IV

DEVELOPMENT OF REASON

1. Summarize the thoughts with regard to education through play or playthings that were brought out at the last lesson.

2. Show how the beginnings of reason and of higher thought are found in nursery stories. Pp. 90-93.

3. Many stories begin with such expressions as: "Once upon a time," "A long time ago," "On the other side of the hill," "At the end of the rainbow," "At the end of the road." What is the effect of these expressions upon the child? Pp. 93-95.

4. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." Can you explain the apparent exceptions to this.

5. How do kindergarten activities of drawing, sewing, building, etc., develop the reasoning power? Pp. 99-101.

6. The sense of continuity helps the child to explain suffering, fits of temper, etc. What would be the effect if this were over-emphasized? P. 103.

7. What should guide the mother in selecting reading matter? P. 105.

8. What science may be taught the child and how may it be presented? Pp. 105-108.

9. How may a mother best prepare her child to meet all conditions in life? Pp. 110-113.

10. What things do teachers do that cause children to quit using their reason to some extent and depend instead upon their memory? What things do parents do that cause children not to trust their own powers of reason and not try to use this power?

11. How may the school and the home co-operate in developing the capacity for reasoning in the minds of the children from earliest infancy?

LESSON V

JUSTICE AND PUNISHMENTS

1. Summarize what was learned at the last lesson about the ways in which our children's capacity to reason is injured or is developed by us.

2. Tell the story to show what the true office of punishment is and how it should be administered. Pp. 113-118.

3. To what extent should the child be allowed to suffer the consequence of his own misdeeds? Pp. 118-122.

4. Does the mother or the teacher have better opportunities to teach justice and injustice? How does Miss Harrison suggest that this be done? Is her view correct? How have you yourself done it? Pp. 122-126.

5. What are the effects of placing too great temptation before a child? Pp. 127-130.

6. What are the effects of using bribes and rewards to secure good conduct? Illustrate some ways in which this is done. How may good conduct be properly rewarded without doing harm to the child? Pp. 128-130.

7. Is it ever proper to arbitrarily compel the child to do a thing in order to break his will? Pp. 130-131.

8. Should a parent never punish a child while either it or the parent is angry? Why?

9. How may we give the child our exalted view of life?

10. What are the objections to the use of corporal punishment at home? What at school?

11. What other punishments are more effective: (a) in preventing misbehavior; (b) in developing character?

LESSON VI

TRAINING THE WILL

1. Summarize what was learned at the last meeting about punishments and rewards.

2. How does the sense of "ought" and "must" arise? Pp. 136-139.

3. How does voluntary obedience differ from other types of obedience? Pp. 139-141.

4. Illustrate from personal experience the use of the alternative situations as a means of punishment. Pp. 141-143.

5. What are the signs which indicate that the child has come to the point at which his individuality must be recognized? Pp. 143-145.

6. What ought parent and teacher do when it is seen that the sense of personal power and personal responsibility in the child lead it to want to choose its own line of work in life? What is the effect of ignoring the child's awakening sense of power and desire to guide his own actions? Does a child develop his will power by exercising it or by submitting his will to that of another?

7. How may we avoid the overdevelopment of individuality into self-consciousness and vanity? Pp. 146-151.

8. How can the special days observed in school serve to give expression to hero-worship?

9. Tell the story of the Five Knights and illustrate how it develops hero characteristics in the child.

10. Show how co-operation and "community" approval will break down the child's obstinacy. Pp. 152-156.

11. How important is it for the parent or teacher to carefully leave open to the child a way of reconciliation towards which he may strive? Can you give a concrete case showing how this was done and another in which it was not done?

12. By drawing illustrations from the boyhood lives of great men, show how what is considered obstinacy in children often develops into adult characteristics which make these men famous.

LESSON VII

RELIGIOUS TRAINING

1. Review what was learned at the last meeting about the training of the will.

2. To what extent does the outward activity of a child mark his inner spiritual life? P. 164.

3. What, according to the author, is the significance of the hand as a mark of character and disposition? Could training in open-handed games develop a spirit of frankness in the child? Pp. 165-169.

4. What is the relation between an "expanded chest" and inner soul conditions? What is the danger of misinterpreting? Pp. 171-174.

5. What are the effects of assumed bodily positions upon spiritual life and character? Pp. 174-176.

6. What forms of activity in the home, school, or church life of the child do you think are artificial and not well adapted to the development of the right inner response in children? Pp. 176-178.

7. How does the inner religious life first begin to show itself? How are these first manifestations affected by the mother's and teacher's attitude towards them? P. 180.

8. How may compulsory attendance at church and Sunday school work great harm? How may attendance be secured without working harm, when the child does not desire to go?

LESSON VIII

IMITATION AND TRUE FAITH

1. What general conclusions were reached at the last meeting about religious training?

2. Show how imitation is the child's experimental laboratory in which he seeks to understand his environment. Pp. 183-187.

3. Kindergarten pageant games serve what purpose in child life? Pp. 187-190.

4. To what extent does this pageant acting become a permanent mark of character? Pp. 190-192.

5. How may the child be given a true conception of invisible

forces and how may this become a basis of faith in God? Pp. 192-195.

6. Recall stories of your own children's first attempts to explain nature and to infer one thing from another. Pp. 195-197.

7. How may the child's random questions on things about him be used to develop reverence and an increased capacity for religion? 197-199.

8. What is the danger of moralizing on every point? Would it be better to teach the child and allow the subtle force to work unconsciously with him? Pp. 200-203.

9. General review. Let each one bring a list giving the one most helpful thought which she has got from each of the eight lessons. Also let the members give concrete cases in which they have successfully applied an idea learned in the course to the handling of their children.

