

**HOME
OCCUPATIONS FOR
BOYS AND GIRLS**

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Home Occupations for Boys and Girls by Bertha Johnston & Fanny Chapin

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BERTHA JOHNSTON & FANNY CHAPIN

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FOR
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BY
BERTHA JOHNSTON
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ASSISTED BY
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Teach him. He is naturally clever. From his earliest years, when he was a little fellow only so big, he would build mud houses, carve out boats, and make little wagons of leather, and frogs out of pomegranate rinds, you can't think how cleverly.

Aristophanes, 421 B. C.

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PREFACE

The plan of this book has special reference to the Mother when comes the woful plaint, "I don't know what to do! Mama, what can I do now?"

Is she busy in the kitchen? She has right there material for the little one's happy employment. Is she mending the stockings? She can give him needle and thread and, with the aid of this book, a word of suggestion. In spare moments both mother and children can together prepare papers, cards, etc., for future occasions.

It will be found upon examination that although some of the articles described herein require material peculiar to certain localities, very many more may be made of things to be found in every home, whether the city flat or the remote country homestead. Usually a choice is possible. One may use the cardboard, paper, etc., saved from the scrap-basket or may send to supply houses for material partially prepared. It is an undoubted advantage for the child to be trained to see the possibilities in the raw material lying at hand. It stimulates his inventive imagination and makes for efficiency and the power to cope with emergencies.

The child accustomed to looking upon odds and ends of wire, paper, weeds, seeds, and grasses as hiding delightful secrets which he may learn to unravel and utilize, may be readily trained to regard all Nature as a vast storehouse open to his investigation, and a continual source of inspiration.

The child, habituated to mastering the raw material of his immediate environment, will not be discomfited if thrown upon an unknown shore, whether arctic or tropical. He will recognize everywhere

about him possibilities for shelter, food, clothing, and transportation and will know how to use them.

But the child must be trained to perceive the beautiful and the ideal as well as the useful. Into each article here described, even the simplest, enter the elements of beauty, proportion, harmony of line and color, and good, true workmanship, leading surely, even if unconsciously, to an appreciation of the best wherever found.

In making an article as a gift for child or adult, thought for others is cultivated and the frequently needed help of older brother or sister encourages the spirit of goodwill and kindness.

The festival occasions are especially valuable in developing the sense of interdependence and large-mindedness.

Among a people proverbially wasteful it is certainly the part of wisdom to train the child to economy for the sake of future service. The contents of the city garbage barrel are found by business men to be worth sorting and classifying and everything proves to be of some use. Why should not the child be taught, before throwing away the discarded picture book, to ask if there is not a use for it still? A nation so trained will preserve its forests and save its Niagaras. It will see things material and things spiritual in their true relations.

We would suggest that a little cupboard be placed within easy reach of the child. Here he may keep his own scissors, paste, pencil and papers, ready for use when the propitious moment of inspiration seizes him.

Too much exactness must not be required of the very young child, but as fast as he is able to do good work insist upon the best of which *he* is capable.

Train him always to try to surpass himself. Above all, let him be happy in the doing.

The ideas offered in this volume have been garnered from various sources. Practical experience in the home has suggested many, and actual daily work in the kindergarten has given rise to others. A few, such as the thimble biscuit party and croquet with peas, are among the recollections of happy childhood.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the obligation to Miss Fanny Chapin, of Chicago, a kindergartner of long experience, for the comradeship of thought which made the book possible. Miss Chapin also contributed the directions for making feather flowers, many of the holiday suggestions, and other items scattered through the book.

The conversion of corks into a set of furniture was learned from a German playmate twenty-five years ago. Imagine the interest with which we discovered a set, almost identical, at the German exhibit of the recent International Kindergarten Union.

The candlesticks of tin or cardboard, brightened with colored tissue-paper, varied to suit particular occasions, is a regular feature of the festival dinners at the Gertrude House, Chicago.

To one and all to whom, consciously or unconsciously, we may be indebted for any suggestions, we express our thanks.

A perusal of this little volume will show that it is far from exhaustive of the topics treated. It is largely a book of suggestion. If it stimulates the child to new investigations and experiments along similar lines; if it reinforces the spirit of brotherly kindness in the home; or if it helps to solve any of the problems of the mother, the hopes of the authors will be accomplished.

BERTHA JOHNSTON.