FIRST JOURNEYS IN NUMBERLAND

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First Journeys in Numberland by Ada van Stone Harris & Lillian McLean Waldo & Frederick Richardson

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Trieste

First Journeys in Numberland

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DEDICATION

To the Children, north, south, east, and west,
who have been our inspiration, and for
whom it has been a privilege
and a blessing to work

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INDEFINITE COMPARISON.....18, 19, 20

MEASUREMENT—

- The Foot.....21-25, 32
- The Inch.....30, 32, 59, 115
- The Yard.....135
- The Pint and the Quart.....110, 132
- The Peck.....132, 133

NAMES AND SYMBOLS.....26, 82, 83, 85, 94, 124, 132, 140, 141

COINS.....34, 35, 140

COUNTING—

- to 10.....17, 36, 65
- to 20.....82, 83
- to 30.....124, 125
- to 50.....140, 141

COUNTING BY 2'S AND 3'S.....58, 84, 125

GROUPING.....26, 37-46, 53, 67, 77, 79

MAKING.....27-29, 31, 33, 42, 44, 45, 62-64, 70-74, 87, 92, 99, 107-109, 116, 118, 119, 131

ADDING.....38-41, 43, 54, 55, 57, 62, 65, 68, 80, 93, 95, 126, 142

SUBTRACTING.....46-49, 53, 59-61, 81, 96, 127

ADDING AND SUBTRACTING.....50, 51, 53, 66, 67, 69, 75-79 97, 98, 128

EXERCISES.....43, 49, 51, 53, 57, 61, 67, 69, 77, 79, 98, 103, 106, 117, 121, 128, 130, 138, 139, 143

REVIEW.....51, 80, 81, 134, 142

BUYING AND SELLING.....54, 55, 68, 102, 114, 120, 122, 123, 129, 132, 133, 137

NUMBER STORIES.....38, 39, 47, 48, 56
GAMES...26, 37, 40, 41, 47, 48, 50, 62, 75, 86, 92, 93, 97, 104, 105, 131, 134
SIGNS.....57, 61, 103
ROMAN NUMERALS.....85, 86, 87
TELLING TIME.....87-91, 112
THE DOZEN..... 94
TABLES..... 143
THE HALF.....110-115, 117
THIRDS.....135, 136, 137, 138
DRAWING.....59, 111, 117, 138
MULTIPLYING.....100-106, 129, 130, 133, 134
DIVIDING.....120, 121, 123, 139

INTRODUCTION

By watching the four or five year old child as he moves about the home, tapping and counting the tables, chairs, and his toys, and expressing his counts, one will recognize the reality of the *numbering* instinct and the intense pleasure of the child in the natural impulse to express it. The child's interest in acts of *measuring* reveals itself with equal strength when the means are supplied and he is shown how to set about the work. For a time the pleasure he takes in the mere activities of the counting, measuring, and grouping is a satisfying end in itself. These activities are rhythmical and it is perhaps this characteristic that produces the pleasure. As a rhythmic stanza or melody is readily held in mind, so are rhythmically ordered, grouped, or measured ideas economically learned. This brings us to the first principle, viz.:

Numbering is the mind's economic way of ordering, measuring, and grouping things for use.

By the time the child enters the public school he feels the crudeness of his attempts to express himself in the language of numbers and is eager for help. At this point attention to his number interests should become systematic, and definite