

**EXERCISES IN MIND-
TRAINING; IN QUICKNESS OF
PERCEPTION, CONCENTRATED
ATTENTION AND MEMORY**

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Exercises in mind-training; in quickness of perception, concentrated attention and memory by
Catharine Aiken

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CATHARINE AIKEN

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IN
MIND-TRAINING

*IN QUICKNESS OF PERCEPTION
CONCENTRATED ATTENTION
AND MEMORY*

BY

CATHARINE AIKEN

AUTHOR OF "METHODS OF MIND-TRAINING"



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1899

PREFACE

THIS book is intended to provide for busy teachers the exercises which I have formulated and used for the growth and development of those mental powers most needful to the student in acquiring knowledge-material—viz., Quickness of Perception, Concentrated Attention, and Memory.

I am aware that the end for which this book is written will not be attained without enthusiasm on the part of the teacher. It was written of Agassiz: "His power over his pupils might be measured by his own enthusiasm." Even his vast learning was not the measure of his power—it was his exhaustless enthusiasm.

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In order that the "*habit*" of attention may become "second nature," the training should be given continuously—that is, *every day*. Five, seven, or ten minutes should be spent in the different exercises according to the age of the pupils. In the primary department, do not occupy more than seven minutes each day in mental drill. For pupils from eight to ten years of age Exercises (1), (2), (3), and similar ones will afford sufficient mental effort for a morning's drill until they have reached successfully the 22d Exercise in figures and the 5th in spelling; afterwards, the time used for the training may occupy ten or fifteen minutes.

Twenty minutes a day is considered sufficient time for *direct* mental training for the most advanced pupils.

The teacher may vary the training by giving oral exercises, such as will train the ear to accuracy in hearing; this must be done through attention, by reading a list of unfamiliar names or foreign words and involved sentences, then requiring the pupils to repeat or write them correctly. This

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practice, if persistently pursued, will result in the pupils becoming good listeners.

The *number* of exercises of the same kind indicate the amount of drill usually found necessary to the end in view; to these the teacher may add others, if the results are not at first satisfactory.

The length of time in which the teacher's work is shown—in other words, the rapidity with which the black-board revolves—must be left to the teacher's judgment, determined by the age of the pupils and the length of the exercise.

The same exercise should not be repeated in order to insure attention. One showing, as in one revolution of the black-board, or one reading will serve better to quicken the perceptive faculty and sharpen the attention than repetition.

The discipline derived from the daily practice of each group of exercises prepares the mind to seize upon the succeeding group, and gradually to acquire habits of alertness and attention.

Let it be constantly borne in mind that the object of this book is not primarily to suggest methods of *teaching*, but methods of *training* the mind to receive instruction, and that these methods have been tried and found distinctly efficacious as means to an end.

In Part II knowledge-material is used only as secondary in importance to the specially directed mental effort, whereby help in acquiring knowledge is obtained.

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