

# First Stages Of MAN



water. As they try to grab these and hold them in their tiny fists all fear is forgotten, and they splash and kick about quite happily. Drying all the little crevices between fingers and toes and folds of fat skin is usually a tedious affair, but even this is beguiled by counting each little finger and toe or playing any of

As we grow older, the past is always more charming than the present. We paint it with a glamour which softens its harsh outlines and lightens its gloomy shadows. Most of us say that childhood was the happiest period of our lives, but an analysis of our reactions then may not have produced that result, writes Dr. Mary Anthony in a London exchange.

The baby, of course, is completely and unconsciously happy when he is well fed, comfortable and sleepy. Passing through life's different stages, he comes again in old age to the period of unconscious happiness with his physical wants completely satisfied.

For the first year or so, baby is naturally the centre and the pivot of his own little world. He cries to make known his wants and he discovers that the louder he cries the more quickly does he gain attention. A normal, healthy baby cries only for a definite reason: because he wants something or he is uncomfortable. An ailing child will cry for hours. He does so to be picked up and comforted because his little bones ache from lying too long in the same position, or he has an obscure pain which prevents his reaching that happy state of blissful easy sleep.

The delicate child must, of course, be studied, and nursed, and allowed to cry as little as possible. But the healthy child soon begins to cry when things bore him, such as dressing and undressing or lying alone in his pram.

In these early months training can begin. Dressing is turned into a game, so that pushing arms in and out of vests or having the face and ears washed becomes an affair of rhythm and mirth. Children quickly learn the meaning of "One, two, three, push," and so dressing goes on rapidly. Those who are afraid of the bath can be given little floating dishes and ducks to put in the

the time-honoured nursery games.

All this may appear to be unnecessary, but a trial of such methods will convince a mother that it is time well spent. The nursery becomes a place of laughter instead of tears and yells, and the routine is gone through more quickly. Discipline naked and undisguised should have no place in the nursery. Babies cannot reason; they are innocent offenders, and yet misguided people will train a baby by fear. The sensitive ear at once appreciates the significance of the harsh tone or the loud voice. An infant is soon cowed, and he is no longer cheerful and happy as he gives up his toys submissively.

For toddlers, discipline in the nursery is necessary. Otherwise, they will never learn to be tidy, clean and punctual. Once rules are established, they should not be broken, so that a habit may be formed easily and painlessly.

After a short holiday, such as Easter, children may return home a little spoilt. Relations want to give the little visitor the best time possible, so that he is indulged and humoured in every way. He should not be expected to resume his normal routine at once. It is cruel to insist on his afternoon sleep, and to keep him forcibly in his cot when he has not slept in the day-time during the holidays. A battle of wills at this juncture usually results in the child yielding suddenly after a few days' sharp struggle, but his sense of repression leads him into acts of naughtiness long after the tussle of wills between him and his mother has been forgotten.

At this period the child is much more centred on his mother than on his father, though later on the father may be the dominant figure. Repressions and fears should not appear on the mental horizon during these impressionable years. The sky should be unclouded and the world

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