"Cracker Rat"----"Milk Rat"

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Recommended Citation
Nisewanger, Melba (1927) ""Cracker Rat""----"Milk Rat", The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 7 : No. 3 , Article 7.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol7/iss3/7
"Cracker Rat"----"Milk Rat"

THAT the observation of growth experiments on rats could sufficiently interest pre-school children in the need for growth stimulating foods—such as lettuce and milk—with the result of a positive response in their own eating habits, is a new accomplishment in nutrition research. The experiment carried on by Ellen Kleppe for her master's thesis, however, indicates that such projects may prove of considerable value in helping the little folks to acquire correct food habits.

In an experiment with lettuce, two young white rats were brought daily to the Iowa State College nursery school for three weeks, and occasionally thereafter. A basal diet in biscuit form was fed to the "cracker-rat," while lettuce supplemented this diet for the "lettuce-rat." Water was given to both animals.

Once each week, while the children were observing, the animals were weighed. The children recorded the weights by making red and blue pencil marks on the dial of the scales. The appearance, activity, and food of the animals were observed and discussed by the children and the teachers from time to time. After a period of six weeks the differences in the animals were so pronounced that all the children noticed them readily. At this time the children decided to feed lettuce to the small animal too, in order to see if it would "grow big." During this project the children received head lettuce in small individual paper packages as their mid-morning lunch.

Another experiment, in which milk was shown as the growth stimulating food, was conducted for six weeks. No recovery of the deficient animal was attempted. The growth of the animals in the milk-fed group was superior to that of the animals in the "cracker-rat" group. The children recorded the weights by making red and blue pencil marks on the dial of the scales. The appearance, activity, and food of the animals were observed and discussed by the children and the teachers from time to time. After a period of six weeks the differences in the animals were so pronounced that all the children noticed them readily. At this time the children decided to feed milk to the small animal too, in order to see if it would "grow big." During this project the children received milk with their mid-morning lunch.

The Role of Home and Parents

Ask any live community, "What is your ideal?"
"Prosperity," nine out of ten would answer.
"As an end in itself?"
"Oh, no. As a means to . . ."
The rest would be difficult for a mayor or councilman to state. Let the ancient Greeks say it:
"... a means to the good life."

The modern community, therefore, tries to provide social contacts making the good life possible for every citizen. But the good life in varying degree, since no two citizens have equally developed personalities. The range and quality of the wants they wish satisfied are unequal.

The fundamentals of the good life are:

1. Power to obtain want satisfactions, or in other words, a good living. This means effectiveness in making income.

2. Back of effectiveness in making income is power to produce. This in turn goes back to training in how to make, or how to do, well, something which has market value, hence brings in income.

Professor Ernest Groves of Boston University in a recent book diagnoses the "drifting home." Homes are in no danger of drifting which see clearly their relation to the community.

The home is the unique unit, the nest, where the fledglings gradually, as they become birds, learn to catch their own worms and to fly.

How early should wise parents loosen the apron strings and put their children in touch, first with one, then with another and another set of social contacts outside of the nest? Remember that outside more than inside contacts stimulate responses in the child and start his personality development.

The pre-school nurseries get many children as early as the age of two. One in New York City is experimenting with the age of six months. I shall not suggest a specific age. But certainly the outside contacts should be started very early.

The child gets:

1. From outside contacts, social discipline and ideas.
2. From inside the home.
   a. A clearing house for the ideas brought from outside. Here parents are the counselors and guides.

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