

A. Taylor Heads Teachers' Assoc.

Allen Taylor Thornhill School will head the Vaughan Teachers' Association for 1964-65 as president. Vice-president will be Martin Van Bommel, Powell Road School; secretary, Miss Dianne Dyson, Charles Howitt School and treasurer, Mrs. Willa Redman, New Pine Grove School.

Peter Kurita, B.A., Kleinburg School will head the principals' association for the next year and will be assisted by vice-president, Miss Audrey Leary, Powell Road School and Secretary, William Hazel, New Pine Grove School.

Superintendent J. R. MacDonald told Vaughan Township School Area Board, Thursday evening, that both organizations perform a valuable service in the school system by providing a liaison between the staff and the administration by providing a channel for communication and in sponsoring in-service training activities.

GORMLEY

Correspondent:
Mrs. Chas. Milsted
Telephone 886-5201

Mrs. Annie Hills from Fairview Home at Preston, is visiting her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Hoodley.

Mr. and Mrs. S. N. Doner and Mrs. Fred Doust had dinner Thursday with Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Doner of Stouffville and Miss Beulah Heise of Preston, who was also visiting the Doners.

Mrs. Beulah Jones spent some time with her daughters-in-law, Mrs. Harry Jones of Toronto, whose mother passed way this past week in Toronto.

George Boynton Junior has resumed his studies at Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph for his second year.

John Farquharson and Maurice Farquharson enjoyed a couple of days duck hunting in the north.

George Cober has been confined to his home with a bad knee.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Clark of King's County, Nova Scotia, visited Mr. and Mrs. Jack Gamble Thursday.

Walter Brillinger, Misses Jean and Vera Brillinger and Mrs. Melvin Henderson attended the official opening of the new Steckley Funeral Home at Barrie Wednesday night.

The junior women's sewing circle of Heise Hill met on Monday night at the home of Mrs. Bruce Eade.

Mr. and Mrs. S. N. Doner and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Doust spent Sunday with relatives at Creemore.

Mrs. Blanche Read has been spending a few days in Bracebridge.

Mrs. Lorne Ruegg spoke and showed her pictures of their work in the far East to the WMS ladies at the United Missionary Church on Tuesday evening.

Mrs. D. C. Henry of Toronto spent the weekend with the Milsteds.

Harry Kruse spent the Thanksgiving weekend at his cottage near Parry Sound.

Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Stickle and Mr. and Mrs. Levi Diller of Scarborough spent last weekend at a cottage at Eagle Lake near South River.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Milsted attended a gathering Saturday night at the home of Drs. W. C. and M. Arkinstall of Newmarket for their son and his bride, Dr. and Mrs. William Arkinstall who leaves October 15 for Brussels enroute to the Congo.



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Montessori Private School Offers A Unique Educational Experience

BY MARGARET McLEAN

Jeremy was the envy of his classmates. "Oh, you lucky duck," breathed David. Laurel stood to one side, watching intently and eager to help. Other children paused on their way across the room to watch.

Jeremy was confidently working at a long division problem, dividing 724 into 9,487,212. He explained each step to me as he went along, with the other children putting in a word here and there too, all obviously longing to have their turn.

Jeremy is six years old. He is a pupil in the Toronto Montessori School which recently took over occupancy of the Thornlea School at 8569 Bayview Ave., north of Highway 7.

Here 140 children ranging in age from three to eight are being taught not only their three "R's" but such extras as French, music and rhythmic dancing, by the world-renowned Montessori method.

SENSORIAL DEVELOPMENT Developed in Italy by Dr. Maria Montessori in the early 1900's, the Montessori method stresses the development of all the child's senses, and through this a fuller appreciation and understanding of the world around him.

Colour sense is developed by the use of small coloured squares which fit into neat wooden boxes. Beginners start with a box containing only three or four colours and graduate to large boxes which may have six or seven different shades of red or blue.

A fine sense of touch is developed with boxes containing swatches of materials of different textures, two samples of each. Blindfolded, the child sorts out the pieces, placing the matching ones together. These boxes also vary in their difficulty, the first one having such different materials as silk and corduroy.

At one conveniently small table, a three-year-old sat com-

and hearing. When, and only when, the child shows further curiosity about the letters, the teacher will show him simple, phonetic words which he then forms for himself, usually lying on a rug on the floor and getting his whole body into the act.

Similarly with numbers, three and four-year-olds will be shown brightly coloured disks, some with numbers printed on them. On the desk top, they take pleasure in placing one disk under the number one, two under the two, and so on, while the teacher helps them to count.

Work with numbers progresses, using a variety of materials, wooden blocks, cubes, beads, etc. A box of beads will have a set of half a dozen cards with it, bearing simple arithmetical problems, 5 + 2 = etc. The child places on the desk a set of five beads wired together, then a card bearing the plus sign, then a set of two beads wired together, counts the total number of beads and writes down the answer 7 on a piece of paper.

Jeremy worked out his problem in long division with a set of small test tubes each containing ten beads, several small bowls, into which he would drop his groups of different coloured "hundreds" or "tens" etc., before placing them in their proper places in small peg boards.

"How long do they use beads?" I asked. "Before long they find the beads a nuisance—they can see the answer without them!" answered the principal of the school, Mrs. Helma Trass who was my guide. Later, she showed me Jeremy's Metropolitan Achievement test papers (which North York uses to grade children). Much of Jeremy's work was on the grade 3 level and he was able to do simple addition, subtraction, multiplication and short division in the conventional manner, through his fascinating "play" with the beads.

MANUAL SKILLS Much emphasis is also placed on developing the children's manual dexterity as a preparation for the acquisition of writing and an "explosion" into writing is not uncommon. Jeremy's fingers I noticed were quite nimble in picking up and placing the small beads; he was using, about the size of a small green pea. Also, he was quite ambidextrous. "Now I have to put all those beads back", he twinkled at me, and proceeded to do so with both hands, picking two beads up at a time. (I don't think he'll be using beads much longer).

Many little girls were engaged in pouring small pitchers of corn, rice or barley into small cups, and picking up individual grains with their fingers when any seeds spilled.

From this the children graduate to pouring water, and develop a steady hand at it. Both boys and girls were often to be seen in the small, well-equipped kitchens which are a prominent feature of every Montessori classroom. Here they poured out water to wash not only their own hands and faces, but using real soap, washed up small dishes and dried them carefully.

HOUSEHOLD TASKS At another table, an intent three-year-old sat, shoeless, as she carefully waxed her little red shoes and spent the next 20 minutes polishing them to a high gloss.

Another little tot was busy with a can of Brasso bringing a small brass jug to a gleaming finish.

All these homely activities are offered to the child to help make the child more independent while at the same time giving him a sense of accomplishment and developing his manual skills.

In all teaching situations, the emphasis in the Montessori method is "show the child, don't tell him". The teachers spoke very little, and when they did in a very quiet voice, barely above a whisper.

The result—the children listened intently when the teacher did speak, and none of them raised their voices enough to disturb a concentrating neighbour.

FRENCH FOR THREE-YEAR-OLDS Even in the French class this method was used as much as possible. In a very few moments, using a cardboard cutout of a toy soldier, the teacher taught the children to understand and say, in French, "Tu-tu" is on the chair, under the chair, on the table, "Tu-tu" goes to the blackboard, to the table, etc.

The children begin French at three years and although Mrs. Trass laughingly admitted the three-year-olds sit and stare at their teacher, who speaks nothing but French to them, as if she is a creature from outer space, by Christmas they can understand what she is saying.

In the French class when I entered a dozen five-year-olds were singing "En Passant Par Lorraine" gaily. When the teacher held up a card bearing the letters "eh" and repeated the sound in French, they came up with "Chaise", "chat" and "chien" (chair, cat and dog) as words with the same sound.

The younger children spend half a day at the school, coming either in the morning or afternoon. This year, 40 children stay all day and instruction is given up to grade 3. The children all progress at their own pace and eventually, the school will bring children up to high school entrance.

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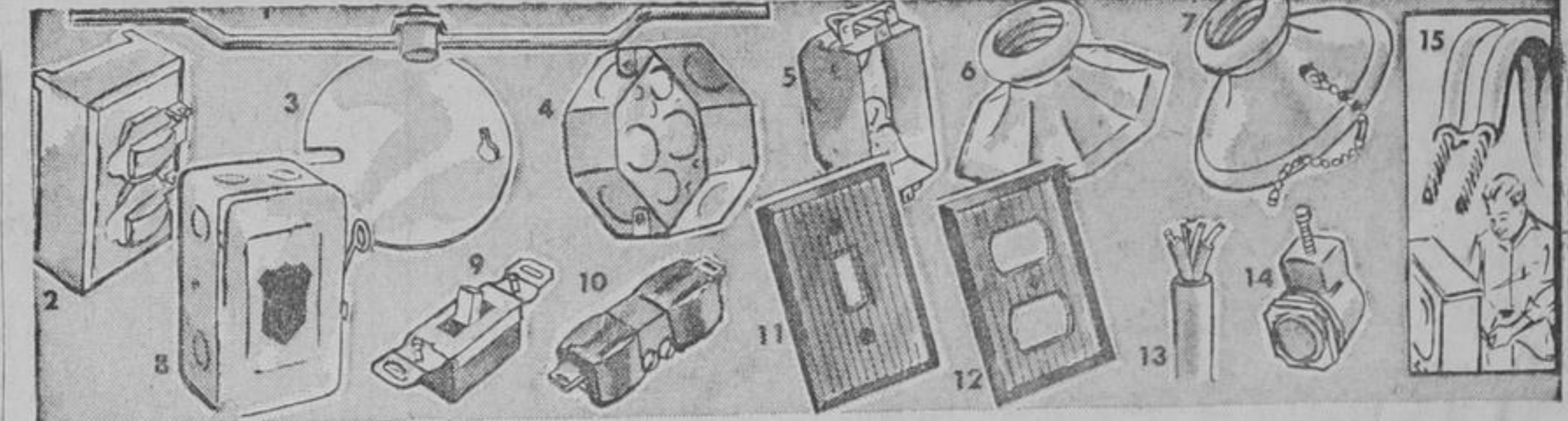
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French teacher Mrs. R. Salamon checks five year old Lisa Cheeman's French exercise, while four year old Christopher Thomas works out arithmetic problems using gaily colored blocks at the Montessori School, now located in the former Thornlea school, Bayview Avenue. (Photo by Barbour)

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