

The April Meeting of the Nat'l Acad. Sciences

By invitation of Dr. Bell the local Committee of the National Academy of Sciences met on March 10, at 1331 Connecticut Avenue to discuss plans for the April meeting.

Present: Mr. Hillebrand, Chairman; Dr. A. L. Day, Home Secretary; Dr. Woodward, President of the Carnegie Institution; Dr. Rose and Dr. Bell.

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On the afternoon of March 10, Miss Beale, secretary of the Associated Charities of Washington, called at the Volta Bureau to consult with Dr. Bell about one of Miss Reinhardt's pupils (Kenneth). The boy's father having lost his situation owing to the change in the administration, is unable to keep his son longer at Miss Reinhardt's and as there is ^{over the city} no school for the Deaf in the District of Columbia, the question has arisen as to how to continue the child's education. He is an exceptionally bright boy, and it is considered to be a pity to interrupt his progress.

The Montessori Educational Association

On Thursday, March 12, Mrs Bell held a reception at 1331 Connecticut Avenue to the members of the Montessori Educational Association. Between fifty and sixty persons were present. Mr. Claxton, Mr Bell, ^{Miss Beale} and Miss George addressed the company.

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woman whose life and activities hold more inspiration for others than do those of Mrs. Bell.

At the age of three years an attack of scarlet fever left her in that world of silence where there is neither speech nor hearing. Like Helen Keller, Mrs. Bell has burst the bonds of this silence by sheer force of will, intellect and spirit. She follows the movement of the lips with a ^{just}ness and quick comprehension that makes conversation with her a delight, and she has taught herself to enunciate.

A True Montessorian

Both Dr. and Mrs. Bell — the former, as his wife says, "a true Montessorian before ever Montessori was born" — have always taken the keenest interest in the education of children. In the hope of interesting American mothers in what she considers the greatest method of education and one of the surest means of development so far discovered for the normal child, Mrs. Bell consented to discuss with her interviewer the methods of the Montessori system.

Like many mothers, she said, she was dissatisfied when her children were young with prevailing methods of rearing and educating little ones. The problems of discipline, punishment, reward and character building were acute ones, which she never seemed to solve to her satisfaction. She declared also what she considered a fearful waste of time in deferring systematic education for

five or six years. If a baby learns more in the first months of existence, she asked herself, than in succeeding years, why could we not begin sooner to direct the small intelligence and train the eager little hands ?

After Mrs. Bell's own children grew up there came grandchildren in whose education she was equally interested. One wet, cold day in February, 1912, she journeyed to Farrytown, N.Y. to see a school about which her friend, S. S. McClure had told her. It was the Montessori school, conducted by Mrs. Montessori's first foreign pupil, Miss Anne George, an American girl. After seeing Miss George teach those babies -- few of the children had reached primary school age, Mrs. Bell felt she had found the ideal method of education for her little grandchildren.

As a result of Mrs. Bell's interest and enthusiasm, Miss George is now principal of a Montessori school in Washington. This is attended by five of the grandchildren of Dr. and Mrs. Bell, and by sixty other little ones.