

of this emotional condition was attitude toward supervisor."

Here are some rules which Dr. Martin prescribes for the rehabilitation of old people and for the postponement of oncoming old age. You may try them yourself if you wish to preserve that schoolgirl reaction.

First, increase the speed with which you react to a signal. At the U. S. Bureau of Standards recently tests were made to see how quickly automobile drivers apply the brakes after they see a danger signal. Even if you respond to a danger signal within a half second, your car might have gone thirty feet during that time. That is the distance covered in a half second at forty miles an hour. But some drivers did not push down on the brake until one second had gone by. Their cars went 60 feet before the brakes were even touched. How far would your car go?

If you are one of the type with slow "pick-up," when you grow old this failing will probably be exaggerated. Now is the time to test yourself, and speed up if necessary.

Games requiring fast thinking and alertness are recommended for this purpose. Double solitaire is better than the slow moving chess. Tennis will help more than golf.

Next, give attention to your muscles and develop co-ordination in them. Regular physical exercise should be taken, although this need not necessarily be strenuous. The simple movements involved in shuffling cards made one old lady's wrists and fingers more flexible and added greatly to the facility with which she could use her hands.

The next step is to develop your powers of observation. Most people form habits of observation dependent upon their particular interests. In walking down the same street, the engineer may see only the type of construction used in the buildings, the architect will notice also the carvings about the doorways, the silk merchant may pay attention to the material in the ladies' dresses, while the physician will see none of these things but will be able to tell you of the physical defects of those who walk by.

As people grow older, their interests are inclined to narrow, and their field of observation likewise. To overcome this it is necessary to train yourself to look for some type of object to which you ordinarily pay no attention. If you practice this daily, and gradually add new groups, you will open up for yourself whole new fields of interest.

Perhaps the most helpful rule of all is one which it is most difficult to follow—learn to keep your mind on the present task. As exercises for this purpose, Dr. Martin recommends the learning of some new skill. Typewriting, until it reaches the automatic stage, is fine training. Learning to drive an automobile she regards as by far the best way to learn to concentrate the attention on the present and the world of reality outside one's own mind, imagination, and feelings. Reading is good training for mental alertness, if one reads comprehendingly.

Dr. Martin accompanies her prescriptions with the caution not to be discouraged if the improvement seems slow. It takes a good deal longer for grown people to learn than it does for children, but if they have sufficient interest and a little persistence they can learn well.

She began to learn to drive an automobile when she had passed her seventy-sixth birthday. She was seventy-seven and had had more than fifty hours of driving instruction before she obtained her driver's license. But now she drives better than many who learned at a much earlier age.

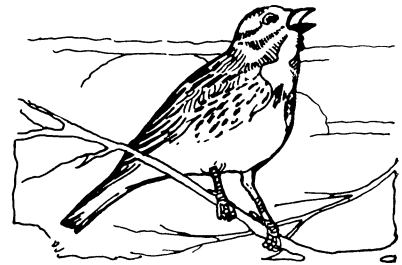
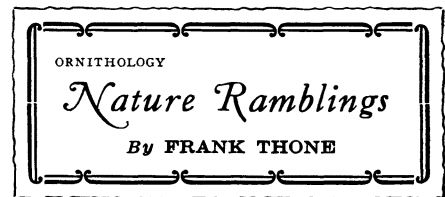
Can rehabilitated old people find places in industry? Dr. Martin says yes. Considerable success has rewarded her efforts at placing those who have been made able to deliver the goods. But the better time to think about readjustment is before the separation from employment takes place. Many firms today offer old age pensions, and they naturally prefer to have these go to those who have spent long service with them.

Old people, when they are at their best, can offer to the business world something which no one younger can. America showed her appreciation of maturity when she set a minimum age of 35 for her highest official—the President.

Thomas A. Edison, America's great inventor, and Paul von Hindenburg, Germany's great soldier and president, are each 83, and both are most active. George Bernard Shaw at 74 has just written perhaps his most scintillating play. Dr. A. A. Michelson, at 77, is still one of the world's greatest physicists. John R. Voorhis, who is 101, is still active as Grand Sachem of Tammany Hall. George F. Baker at 90 still keeps a firm grasp on his many financial interests. Sir Oliver Lodge is 79.

These men are young and active even at advanced ages.

*Science News Letter, March 21, 1931*



Song Sparrow

IN the parts of the country where the winter is mild he stays with us all year round, and even in regions with more vigorous climates he goes away for only a little while, returning while lion and lamb are still contending for mastery in the air. The song sparrow is an unobtrusive little bird, apt to be taken for a common English sparrow by city dwellers, though he is much lighter in color, and incomparably above that slum-dweller in cleanliness, manners and morals.

He does not come into cities, anyway, except where there are large parks with good thickets for shelter and foraging grounds, for he is a bird of the wood-edges and brush-lined country roadsides. The grubbing hoe is a worse enemy to him, as to many of his small fellows, than is the small boy's gun or even the wandering cat.

Like the horned lark, he has but a small song, though that is to be prized for its being heard when other birds are gone or silent. It usually starts off with three soprano syllables: "See? see? see?" followed by a little ecstatic warble that varies a good deal in different individuals, and then begins all over again.

The song sparrow is a bird of wide climatic tolerance. It breeds in Canada from Great Slave Lake to Cape Breton Island, and thence south to Nebraska, Kentucky and the mountains of North Carolina. Its northern range in winter is about identical with its southern summer range, and thence south to the Gulf Coast.

*Science News Letter, March 21, 1931*

A young porcupine's voice has been described as a peculiar little call somewhat like the crooning of a human baby.