

age it until all his means and modes are perfect; or should we recognize it, and, taking it with all its imperfections, seek gradually to improve it without undue checking and coercion? It is certain that we cannot improve it without exercising it; and it is certain that the exercise will not be truly effective unless it begins with the child, and where he is and as he is, and unless it moves forward at a pace suitable to the growth of his powers and the widening of his experience. When teaching a child to walk, the great thing is not merely to walk up and down in his presence, but to set *him* walking, and to seek gradually to improve *his* mode and manner. Our aim is not to get him from one chair to another, but to teach him how to use his limbs. And he can only begin in his own manner. So here, the main thing at first is to set the child imagining and to improve *that*. The actual resulting mental picture is of secondary importance in the earliest stages, and commonly its intrinsic value at best is either *nil* or very transient. We need not be impatient because it is often out of touch with actuality and at times impossible. After all, the angels of Botticelli and Fra Angelico are quite impossible as far as human experience goes; and so are "Paradise Lost," "The Ancient Mariner," More's "Utopia," "Pilgrim's Progress," and many another thing we could but ill spare.

Idealization is commonly defined as the formation of the highest conception of a thing. It is generalization; but, instead of aiming at bringing together all that is typical in the particulars examined, it seeks to combine only what is highest and best in them. By its very nature it transcends actuality, yet it is not out of touch with fact. If, when ideals of goodness, of beauty, of conduct have been formed, it should afterwards be

found that it is quite possible to attain to them, they would cease to be ideals in a true sense. Still higher above those heights would rise the true ideals—for ever unattainable, yet for ever drawing us towards them, and showing with their light the way our feet should climb. They take their rise in the experience of fact but pass through fact to a region beyond actuality. Yet they are none the less true, if rightly formed, merely because they cannot be completely realized. To aid his pupils in forming *ideas* of goodness, truth, beauty, and in transforming these into *ideals* of conduct, should be one of the chief aims of the teacher.

You will now, I think, see what, in my view, are some of the chief relations between fact and fiction. Unless the senses, which give the mind its first material, are exercised on realities, they cannot give the mind the sense-impressions which it needs. Unless observation—which is of supreme importance in the earlier stages, and, indeed, important in all—unless observation is occupied with realities, it cannot do its work properly, nor provide the mental food necessary for mental growth. From observation, experience, and thought springs the mental life of man. And so, too, in generalizing, unless the processes it implies are concerned with realities, not only will the resulting generalizations be unsound and of no permanent value, but also the processes themselves will be imperfectly carried out and fail to produce the needed development; though we must remember that realities do not reveal themselves as such to a young child with the same fulness as they do to an older child, nor to an older child as they do to an adult. The case is very much the same with imagination when the child uses it in order to mentally picture a description or understand a picture. He will