

Now by a few questions he obtains from the pupils the fact that the first cultivators of potatoes, with their rude implements and ignorance of agriculture had to do much digging to obtain but a small crop of potatoes, but that with better implements, improved fertilizers, rotation of crops, we now obtain more potatoes with less digging so that the relation of these terms has been continually changing, the numerator increasing or the denominator diminishing, as may be thus represented.

potatoes
DIGGING

POTATOES
DIGGING

POTATOES
digging

"Does this indicate an increase of wealth or a diminution of wealth?" asks the teacher.

At this point the teacher lets the pupils do their own thinking. It would be unfortunate however to accept at once a rash answer, even though right. Let the process be reversed, and what would be the result? Suppose that in the course of years such a change took place that at first with a day's digging of one man we could obtain a bushel, but that through some change of climate, soil, etc., it required a year's toil to obtain a bushel, would this be an increase of wealth? At once the pupils will perceive that between these two terms, "potatoes" and "digging," or "product" and "toil," there is a relationship, and the teacher will have started them in the right way to solve problems for themselves.

The first teacher develops the memory and neglects the understanding.

The second develops the understanding and uses the memory as far as is required.

The first develops an intellectual mullosk, trying to throw out its tentacles to cling to the support of some authority, a weakling resting on crutches, waiting to be led or misled by some demagogue.

The second develops a student with an intellectual backbone, and a power whereby he learns to scale the heights and depths of economic problems.

I need not indicate to this audience which is the preferable of these two methods of teaching.