

desires, desires lead to determinations, and determinations result in deeds; and complained that such doctrines must be radically false, since it made no provision for a transcendental will. So far as replies to this charge have been given, they indicate that the Herbartians, while greatly interested in the discussion of transcendental will, regard the problem as belonging rather to metaphysics than to pedagogy. In their opinion daily experience teaches that interest does awaken desires and that desires affect volition; and that is enough for the teacher, for he sees in these facts an important approach to conduct. However, in reply to this sound of alarm, it may be said that, if a transcendental will is one that is absolutely free, or one that is entirely lifted above the influence of desire in making choice, then education is comparatively valueless, for it can find no purchase upon such a will. But if the transcendental will is one that is influenced by desire in making choice, one can believe in it heartily and still accept the above-mentioned Herbartian doctrine, for it is known that desire has its origin in interest.

But the general unrest in regard to interest has not been caused alone by Dr. Harris. There are many others who are afraid of interest; who regard the stress now laid upon it as dangerous to several of the most valuable qualities in good character. In order that some of these threatened dangers may be discussed, it is necessary, first, to show to what extent emphasis is now laid upon this subject, with reasons for the same. I shall, accordingly, first present the present standpoint with brief arguments in its favor, and then discuss some of the most serious objections to it.

Interest has been considered a matter of importance from the time of the Greek philosophers down to the pre-

sent. Plato advised that one "Use no violence toward children; the rather cause them to learn while playing"; and Herbert Spencer declares that, "As a final test by which to judge any plan of culture should come the question: 'Does it create a pleasurable excitement in the pupils?'" It is generally understood to-day that one of the best tests of instruction is the degree of interest in it manifested by the children. Where, then, is there anything new in all of this talk about interest? The new standpoint does not deny this old and common view, but is new in the emphasis laid upon it. That standpoint declares that interest in the subject matter of instruction is the *sole* condition under which it can be properly acquired. Indeed, it goes even further than that; it gives to interest the rank that has been usually ascribed to knowledge. The common understanding has been that instruction is aiming at knowledge, and that interest is one of the means by which that aim can be best attained; in brief, knowledge is the end and interest is the means. But the new standpoint asserts interest to be the highest aim of instruction, and ideas to be the means by which that object can be reached; that is, interest is the end and knowledge is the means. Thus the tables have been turned. There is now a strong inclination on the part of many to measure the success of years of teaching not by the quantity of information one possesses on Commencement Day, but by the degree of interest engendered in the lines of study followed. The attitude of mind toward study is, to them, the most important point.

The kindergarten presents the practice of this theory most plainly. The kindergartner is conscious that the development of right tastes is her chief mission and that facts are mere-