

merely insists that the *medium* of communication between the teacher and learner must be understood alike by both,—that it shall be true language to both,—to him that hears it as well as to him that speaks it. The teacher may know familiarly a large number of words. The child necessarily knows but few, and these only imperfectly. In this case it is the child's language, not the teacher's, which must furnish the medium of instruction. The child can not of himself come up to the teacher's plane of expression; the teacher must go down to that of the child's.

*Philosophy of the Law.*—1. Words are signs of ideas. They are not natural symbols, but artificial; hence they will only express to any mind the ideas which that mind has previously associated with them. Language does not necessarily carry to another mind the thought of the speaker, but rather the thoughts or ideas which the hearer has learned to find in its words.

2. The same word is often the sign of several ideas. The teacher may know them all; but the pupil perhaps knows but one. To one person it is rich with a hundred related meanings; to another it is the representation of some one barren notion. To the former it is eloquent with grand and pleasing associations; to the latter it is absolutely destitute of force or beauty. Thus, the simple word *Art*, is, to a Reynolds or a Ruskin, the expression of all that is beautiful, grand, and elevating in human achievement, and of all that is most benign in human civilization. To the ordinary mind it means only craft—a mechanic's trade, or a hypocrite's pretence. So the name *Jesus*, to the Christian thinker, embraces all that is sweet and most glorious in God's moral government, and all that is pure and hopeful in humanity—all the long story of man's fall and degradation, and all the sublime hope of a blissful immortality and of a heavenly home. To the mere worldling it is the simple name of an historic character, without any peculiar import; to the infidel it is a word hateful, if not loathsome. In a less marked degree, such variations of significance belong to hundreds of the common words of our language.

3. He will teach most whose language raises the most and clearest images, and excites the most action in the minds of his pupils. One who can use the child's language, precisely in the child's sense of it, can convey his own thought in its full extent and power to the child's mind,—at least as far as that thought lies within the reach of the child's understanding.

4. But language is the instrument as well as the vehicle of thought. Words are tools under whose plastic power the mind reduces the crude masses of its impressions into clear and valid propositions. The most useful and sometimes the most difficult of the processes of thinking is that of shaping our thoughts into accurate and appropriate expressions. Ideas become incarnate in words. They rise into bodily form in language, and stand ready to be studied and measured, and marshaled into the combinations and working array of intelligible thought. Till they are thus shaped into expression, our conceptions flit as phantoms vague and indistinct; their real character, and their manifold and useful relations are unknown, if not unsuspected. More than half the work of teaching is that of helping the child to gain a full and clear expression of what it already knows imperfectly; to aid him to raise up, and round out into plain and adequate sentence the dim and fragmentary ideas of childhood. It is difficult to overstate the importance of this work. What a miserable mistake and mockery is it, therefore, if the language employed is that to which the pupil does not attach clear and distinct meanings!

5. Thinking is often only the solution of the problems of truth by means of the forms of speech. We labor and

wrestle with the truth as with some opposing force, struggling to reduce it to a clear and full statement under which the mind grasps and uses it. We master it by expressing it, and rest content as one who has gained a victory. Hence, in teaching, the use of language is not merely a vehicle to carry truths from teacher to pupil. It is the subtle agent by which the teacher enters the domain of the pupil's thoughts, touching and rousing the mental forces as with a battle cry—reinforcing the mind in its efforts to master the dim and fragmentary impressions which were crowding upon and confusing it like a beleaguering host. And in this battle it is the pupil's own hand that must grasp and use the weapons offered it. It is the pupil who must talk. What teacher has not sometimes stood and watched this struggle as the childish intellect has grappled with a new truth, and bravely essayed to force it into fitting words in order to understand it?

6. But language has yet another use. It is the storehouse of our knowledge. All that we know of any object, fact, or truth may be found laid up in the words we use concerning them. So the child's language is not only the exact measure of its clearer knowledge, but is, as one may say, the virtual embodiment of that knowledge. When we use, therefore, the language of the child, we summon all his acquired intelligence to our aid. Each word flashes its own kindled light upon the truth it would exhibit to him, and brings its own gathered forces to strengthen our arguments. The first new or unknown word introduced breaks the electric chain of thought. The truth no longer passes entire. A shadow falls upon the field of the pupil's intelligence, and he ceases to work, or gropes in darkness. New words may be necessary when new objects are to be named, or a new idea to be symbolized. Language must keep pace with thought. But till the child's own mind has itself freighted the new symbol with meaning, it can render no service in the commerce of truth. It but darkens and deludes, where it should illumine and guide.

Such, then, are the uses of language in teaching. It enables the teacher to enter into the chambers of his pupil's understanding, call around him all the knowledge with which that understanding is already furnished, rouse into action all the trained powers of thought, suggest the new line of work, and guide and stimulate to the acquisition of the new truths to be mastered and believed in. Who can over-estimate the part this artist-power must play in the work of instruction? The main secret of education lies hidden here.

*RULES.*—The practical rules directed by these principles and growing out of this law are full of importance.

1. Use the fewest, simplest, and plainest words the idea can be expressed with. Every unnecessary word adds to the child's work, and increases the danger of creating misunderstanding.

2. Repeat the thought, if not evidently understood, in other language. This is not the stringing out words forbidden in the foregoing rule, but the holding up the thought under a new light.

3. Use words in the plainest and commonest meaning, and use the same words as far as practicable, always, with the same or kindred meaning.

4. Use short sentences, and of the simplest construction. A long sentence often requires more power of attention than the child possesses, to carry forward and combine into the full and perfect sense the separate meanings of all the words. Short sentences both rest and stimulate the mind.

5. Note carefully the words used by the pupils. This will tell you what words you may use with them, and help you to correct their errors of thought and expression.