

arise as soon as we go beyond those mental states which communicate themselves to the senses of others.

We now see that in order to communicate to our foreigner a knowledge of language, we must follow rules similar to those necessary for the stability of a building. The foundation of the building must be well laid upon objects knowable by his five senses. Of course the mind, as well as the external object, may be a factor in determining the ideas which the words are intended to express; but this does not in any manner invalidate the conditions which we impose. Whatever theory we may adopt of the relative part played by the knowing subject, and the external object in the acquirement of knowledge, it remains none the less true that no knowledge of the meaning of a word can be acquired except through the senses, and that the meaning is, therefore, limited by the senses. If we transgress the rule of founding each meaning upon meanings below it, and having the whole ultimately resting upon a sensuous foundation, we at once branch off into sound without sense. We may teach him the use of an extended vocabulary, to the terms of which he may apply ideas of his own, more or less vague, but there will be no way of deciding that he attaches the same meaning to these terms that we do.

What we have shown true of an intelligent foreigner is necessarily true of the growing man. We come into the world without a knowledge of the meaning of words, and can acquire such knowledge only by a process which we have found applicable to the intelligent foreigner. But to confine ourselves within these limits in the use of language requires a course of severe mental discipline. The transgression of the rule will naturally seem to the undisciplined mind a mark of intellectual vigor rather than the reverse. In our system of education every temptation is held out to the learner to transgress the rule by the fluent use of language to which it is doubtful if he himself attaches clear notions, and which he can never be certain suggests to his hearer the ideas which he intends. Indeed, we not infrequently see, even among practical educators, expressions of positive antipathy to scientific precision of language so obviously opposed to good sense that they can be attributed only to a failure to comprehend the meaning of the language which they criticise.

Perhaps the most injurious effect in this direction arises from the natural tendency of the mind, when not subject to a scientific