

must ascertain, first, the way in which a child learns to speak; second, the various supposed origins of speech; third, we must learn from physiology. The infant makes noises, first, spontaneously; second, initiative or passively, the words being reflexes from the ear; and, lastly, consciously, when the child learns its will and the sign by which he can express it. Following the same idea there are three great sources from which language is said to be derived. One tells us that it comes from interjectional and exclamatory signs of emotion, differentiated and combined to suit man's varying wants. Another, that it is imitative of the noises of nature, such as cracking, whistling, etc. A third, that it is a conscious innovation; that people met together and agreed to say this for this thing, and that for another, etc. Here we have precisely the three stages by which the child learns to speak, and the teaching of reading or writing (which are much the same), if it be philosophical, must be based on the same process. Following these premises, we find ourselves not entirely with Graser, if nearly so, but following the methods employed in the best German schools of to-day.

The infant uses his hand with gesture; in like manner let the little child scribble without restraint or copy, and thus educate his eye and train his hand. Then give him a copy, preferably a word, not a letter, and let him copy it in a cursive hand. Let short sentences follow until the child can write the whole alphabet. Then call his attention to the phonetic sign; let him make it, sing it, and sound it. Training then may be given in other sounds, foreign to our language, for vocal gymnastic exercise. So let the child proceed to composition, the mind advancing synthetically and analytically at the same time. Thus the child first acts spontaneously, then imitates a copy, and lastly sees the way himself.

Of course, no method can be followed but imperfectly, and is open to criticism. The child will learn to speak or spell many words, the meaning of which he has no idea. Let him do so. It is his most receptive time. If he does not learn them then, it will be a

harder task to acquire them in after-life. Some of our most simple words he cannot possibly understand. But as well say that a child should have blinders on its eyes, as that it should be trained to speak only the vocabulary which the teacher prepares for it.

ENGLISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH.

AN American friend of mine, in response to the question by an Englishman (an exceedingly positive and dogmatic person, as it chanced), "Why do Englishmen never say 'I guess'?" replied (more wittily than justly), "Because they are always so positive about everything." But it is noteworthy that whereas the American says frequently "I guess," meaning "I know," the Englishman as freely lards his discourse with the expression "You know," which is, perhaps, more modest. Yet, on the other side, it may be noted, that the "down East" American often uses the expression "I want to know" in the same sense as our English expression of attentive interest "Indeed."

Among other familiar Americanisms may be mentioned the following:

An American who is interested in a narrative or statement will say "Is that so?" or simply "So!" The expression "Possible!" is sometimes but not often heard. Dickens misunderstood this exclamation as equivalent to "It is possible, but does not concern me;" whereas in reality it is equivalent to the expression "Is it possible?" I have occasionally heard the expression "Do tell!" but it is less frequently heard now than of yore.

The word "right" is more frequently used than in England, and is used also in senses different from those understood in our English usage of the word. Thus, the American will say "right here" and "right there," where an Englishman would say "just here" or "just there," or simply "here" or "there." Americans say "right away" where we say "directly." On the other hand, I am inclined to think that the English expression "right well," for "very well" is not commonly used in America.