

in the mind that was not first in the senses. The antagonistic or rival theory recognizes that ideas are innate, and are to be developed by education as a germ develops by growth. According to Locke's theory, the aim of the teacher has been to present facts to the mind of the pupil, assuming that if the facts were all grasped and utilized by the mind, the work of the educator would be complete. The other theory aims not to force the facts upon the mind, but to stimulate or encourage the mind to the exercise of its innate powers.

The first question for the educator, then, is of psychology:—What is the human mind, how does it work, and what are its faculties? From the days of Aristotle to modern times a theory in regard to the operation of the mind has always been assumed—not always the same theory identically, but some theory and investigation into psychology has proceeded on that basis. In physics this method of searching for knowledge has long since been abandoned, and the study of any particular science is no longer conducted upon a theory accepted beforehand, but attention is given solely to the facts or phenomena. And herein is the application of psychology to education. While introspection is not disallowed wholly, the beginning is made by studying the life of infancy, for here certainly only the spontaneous and natural method in education has sway; and infancy is studied moreover upon the anthropological side, on the theory that each child passes through all the stages in its development that the race had passed through.

The idiosyncracies of the mind and insanity, especially of incipient stages, are fruitful fields of study in psychology. The study of physiology must go hand in hand with that of psychology, and the matter of physical education is always important, in order that in the work of education the physical force of the child may be economized. Under the normal system of education, and under a competent teacher, it will prove that the desire of the pupil to learn will outrun the desire of the teacher to convey knowledge. Such a teacher is a sympathetic

teacher—one who enters fully into the child's mind, and who does not fear that by coming down to the child's level in mental exercises and explorations he shall so lose his dignity that he cannot recover it; and if it happens that he has been one to whom the acquisition of knowledge has been a matter of difficulty rather than of ease, that experience of his own will stand him in good stead in respect to devising little expedients of help for the pupil, and removing little hindrances that a teacher whose experience as a student has been different might not apprehend or appreciate. The best quality in a teacher is a natural one, and a thorough teacher always makes a mission of his work.

ORAL COMPOSITION.

WE are indebted for this expressive term to Mr. G. W. Johnson, Head Master of the Hamilton Model School. In a paper which he read before the Wentworth Teachers' Association, and which was afterwards published in the CANADA EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY, he says:—"Oral composition *only* can be taught to junior classes, and it is of equal importance with written to more advanced classes. Pupils should be taught *both* methods, so that, in future life, they may write the simplest business letter without exposing their ignorance, and 'open their mouth without putting their foot in it.'" The whole of Mr. Johnson's suggestive essay, which will be found in the number of the above-mentioned magazine for May-June last, is worthy of the attention of all teachers, dealing, as it does, with a subject which has been as much neglected as it is of practical importance. In many schools, indeed, it may be said, the pupils are taught everything except to think and to express their thoughts with correctness, precision and ease. The master is satisfied if he obtains an answer to his question which is substantially accurate, without regard to the mode of expression. Sometimes the teacher himself sets a bad example by his own careless manner of speech, and thus, though grammar and composition are taught at stated hours, the real object of those studies is, in practice, forgotten.