

on just as they are in a book, I had the greatest possible difficulty in reading them—in reading matter which I had myself written. But the stereotyper could read from the stereotype plate, where all the words and letters come backward, just as easily as from a book; while the compositor can also read with perfect ease the words and letters backwards and upside down. Here, then, are three varieties of the problem—reading from the matrix, reading from the stereotype plate, and reading from the compositor's 'stick.' But the problem for the child is more difficult than any one or than all of these put together; because he has never seen these marks before, does not know the use of them, and has only a half-belief in the value of them. The thick strokes and the thin strokes, the straight lines and the crooked lines, the circles and the half-circles, the circles to the right and the circles to the left, the dots in some of the letters—the dots that adhere and the dots that are free, the strokes through other letters, the tips that hang down and the tips that stick up, the straight tails and the crooked tails, the openings at the top and the openings at the bottom, the letters with two limbs and the letters with three limbs, the square letters and the round letters, and the letters that are neither round nor square—all this seething confusion of forms puzzles and pains his eye. But my friend the stereotyper and myself both read as much by the help of what we *did not see* as of what we *did see*—we judged what was coming by what had come; and our expectations helped our judgments to a speedy decision. But the child has not this help. He must slowly and painfully work out each letter and each word. How absolutely necessary is it then to look out for every kind of aid for him—for aid from every quarter! A self-consistent notation is the very smallest demand he can make. This is a *sine quâ non*. But he will learn all the better if he has the aid of picture and if easy modes of combination by the hand—as in the WORD-MAKER, are provided for him. If he is to learn to read at all—with a not too incommensurate expenditure of time—he must use every power, bodily and mental, that he has got.