

ledge that can never be found when wanted, or if perchance it may have reached that part of the brain called by physiologists the sensorium, which has the power of reproducing its impressions just as a parrot can, it can be reproduced only at a given signal. The fact, or rule, or whatever it may be, is glibly repeated and passes for knowledge, but the pupil can apply it to nothing except to some particular case with which it was previously associated. When someone else than his teacher questions him, he does not understand, does not know what is meant—the signal is not the same. He often hazards an answer which may be a correct one to another question but absurd to the one proposed, and as ludicrous as the scene which has been described between Frederick the Great and a tall French grenadier who knew only three words of German. He was instructed to reply to the King's three general questions on parade, "How old are you?" "Three and twenty." "How long have you been in my service?" "Three years." "Are you satisfied with your rations and lodgings?" "Both, your Majesty." The King, however, took the very unusual course of inverting the first two questions, and the grenadier of course made himself three years old and twenty-three years in His Majesty's service. The King, amazed at such answers, did not put the other question about the rations, but the inquiry, "Are you a fool or am I?" "Both, your Majesty." Such is often the character of the knowledge which we get ready made, and the application we make of it. No doubt examples as ludicrous have been witnessed by some of yourselves. Let me give you one or two, not for the purpose of making sport, but of illustrating the character of knowledge got ready made without bringing the mind to bear upon it. "What is the Equator?" was a question

asked of a class in geography not very long ago. "A line perpendicular to itself and called the meridian." In another class the following questions were asked: "What is the difference between the noun 'book' and book itself?" "What is an abstract noun?" "A collective noun?" To which the following answers were given: "There is no difference." "An abstract noun has no particular calling." "A collective noun is what it wants to make it more complete." In another class the following answers were given to the questions: "What is the circumference?" "Distance round the middle of the outside." "Distance through the middle." "What is the meaning of develop?" "To swallow up." "Give an example." "God sent a whale to develop Jonah." I do not say there are many such cases. I hope there are not, but the existence of any shows that knowledge, however accurately it may be given, may be reproduced in a most absurd form, unless the mind is called into exercise. It must not, however, be assumed that when the knowledge is accurately reproduced it is therefore understood by the pupil or of service to him. A long series of questions may be answered correctly and not one of them be understood. The verbal memory of children is very powerful. They can readily remember sounds without attaching any idea to them, and can readily reproduce them.

The teacher has, therefore, frequently to adopt the other method of securing knowledge, viz.: through mental exertion. He has to train the pupil to do things for himself, to get his own ideas from things. A physical, mental or moral act can be done only by performing it. Every one has to do those things which he would acquire the power of doing. You know yourselves that you could never acquire the power of readily solving