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WHEN SHALL SCHOOL BEGIN ?

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Life is now so complex that the answer to nearly every question must begin, "It depends." This is notably the case when we come to ask at what age a child should begin going to school. We must take at least three things into consideration—the child, the school and the alternative to the school, that is to say, the home. And even when we have weighed these three factors with as much discretion as we are capable of our judgment will unavoidably be colored by our own personal experience.

It happened, for example, in my own case that I did not go to school until I was eight years old and went altogether only about two years. This was followed by the regulation four years at college and then by graduate study at Zurich and at Harvard. Remembering the freedom of such a boyhood, the long, uninterrupted stretches of time for thinking and reading and travel, above all the beautiful comradeship of the mother, and recalling the absolute enthusiasm with which I threw myself, all untired as I was, into the higher studies of the college and the university, it is very natural for me, at any rate, to belittle the function of the school and overpraise life in the open.

* Taken from the *Congregationalist*.