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SCIENCE OF LANGUAGE AND POPULAR EDUCATION.*

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THERE are many reasons why popular education in all its stages should concern itself with the science of language.

1. To be consistent and complete all language teaching should include something of the philosophy and science of speech. No department of study is regarded as complete in which the substratum of general conditions and broad fundamental facts is not in some degree presented and elucidated. In mathematics the basis of general principles is almost taken as the starting-point, and geometry (earth-measuring) has come to be a pure science. So in geography and history, text-books do not confine themselves to a mere list of names, or a mere skeleton of events. In a similar way pupils in the natural and physical sciences are informed of the widest generalizations, the most comprehensive laws of chemical and magnetic action, the conditions of growth and decay, the observed order of the terrestrial and celestial phenomena. So may it justly be expected to be with the teaching of language. For the more practical uses of human speech, education has done a great deal, and is always improving its methods, and more wisely selecting its subjects. The use of language as an instrument of communication is not overlooked, and it is becoming more and more an object of enquiry how pupils may be best taught to gain a command of foreign languages for the uses of living speech. Again, language as a record of thought has had a leading place in all schools, mediæval and modern, and there is probably no study which has been more successfully cultivated than this general philological discipline, or the means of getting at the thoughts of men through a proper analysis and interpretation of the language in which they are embodied. It would therefore seem just and necessary that something should be done for

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