

ter it is being unnaturally acquired, it is being presented by one who does not fully understand the process of nature; in a word, it is the sweetness of nature soured by an ignorance that does not know its own potency. "I know a stupid boy" says some one, "whose cup of knowledge it is impossible to sweeten." "And I know more than one" says another, "whose minds have had to be opened by a violent process, and a modicum of knowledge poured into them." But this, as the knowledge that disciplines, cannot be administered for any length of time with advantage, even to the stupidity that lingers at its work, and ought never to be administered when the mind of the pupil is active. Mental dormancy, we have been told time and again by the old schoolmaster, who has, moreover, not passed through the mill of experience with his eyes shut, can be quickened into newness of life when necessity presses upon it to act. But when the pressure of necessity is continued too long, the result is nearly always the same on the active as on the inactive mind. Nothing is so easily stultified as stupidity, and the process which renders the stupid child more stupid, not unfrequently makes even the clever child lose heart. In dealing with the willing and the unwilling mind the process is the same, the supplying of the food of knowledge that nourishes and strengthens and encourages to self-effort, not the supplying of the medicine of discipline which though it purifies for the moment, eventually enervates, and stultifies the natural gifts in the child. Thanks to Nature there are few, if any, children without "a turn" as it is called, for something good and useful, and it is in this "turn" there lies the hope of mental development. It is this gift which the teacher must first discover before either medicine or food can, with good effect, be administered. By building

upon this nucleus of native intelligence or inclination, the bitter-sweet of school-work soon strengthens the soul to recognise the pleasure of doing one's duty; and when the most indifferent pupil—indifferent perhaps not so much from laziness as a natural longing for muscular freedom—begins to feel this pleasure, the school life becomes all sunshine, the acquiring of knowledge becomes as sweet to the mental desires of the child as is the syrup of the maple to the taste. The natural developments in education are gradual, not violent. The true methods of imparting instruction are born of Nature itself; and under them the knowledge that is acquired is the knowledge that assimilates as a palatable food that nourishes, not as a bitter medicine that nauseates even when it rectifies. By the natural process of getting understanding, the memory is not excoriated with a knowledge that is beyond the comprehension of the intellect. Mind growth is as slow and gradual as body growth, and can be checked only by too much food or too much medicine. The true education has only to guard against a surfeit of the one; since Nature itself has provided the means of escaping the other.

The gibe about cards, puzzles, and riddles, and the *Royal Game of the Goose*, brings to mind an incident in school-life which the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, ex Premier of Canada, used to tell when he was in the company of teachers, as a warning against the effects which might arise from their adopting modern methods in school-work. A young teacher who had picked up some notions of a natural method of imparting instruction, one day proceeded to give the boys and girls of the country school over which he had presided only for a short time, a lesson on the solar system. Of course, there was no apparatus by means of which he could