

This fact should not be over-looked in the process of teaching. The ability to concentrate attention will depend upon the power of observation, perception, judgment and reason.

It is not, however, enough that the teacher awaken the mental activities of the pupil and give him ideas; he must teach him to appropriate by the aid of his previous knowledge all that comes to his mind. He should know how to set his ideas in their proper light and bring them into the best possible adjustment. This work of association or apperception cannot be left to blind chance. It should be regarded as the highest art of the educator rightly to induce the process of mental assimilation in the pupil and to conduct it to a sure conclusion. Under the most favorable circumstances, when the child receives material for which it already has apperceptive ideas, the old and the new often fail to be assimilated. Hence it does not suffice that the learner possesses apperceptive aids, but these must stand, as it were, at the threshold of consciousness so as to present to the new knowledge all that is related and thus prepare for it the right mood and correct understanding. Lange writing on this subject says:—"Accordingly, it cannot be the duty of the teacher simply to transmit to the pupil the material of knowledge or to communicate to him ideas, feelings and sentiment, but to awaken stimulate and give life to mental activities. He has to reach down with regulative hand into those quiet, private thoughts and feelings of the child in which lie his ego and his whole future, that they may rise above the threshold of consciousness and communicate understanding, clearness, warmth and life to instruction. In a word, he has to make provision that in every case the process of apperception is accomplished with as much thoroughness as certainty and judgment. Then not only will the matter taught be mechanically acquired, but it will be transformed at once into mental power; it will contribute steadily, by awakening thought and interest, to lift and ennoble the mental life."

It can easily be seen that education is not a spontaneous thing, but comes from known principles. It is progressive, keeping pace with the healthy growth of mind. The teacher studies carefully the whole being of his pupil and discovers the laws of its harmonious actions just as the skilful engineer thoroughly studies the mechanism of his machine. There is much for the educator to learn concerning the body, mind and soul, the condition of their harmonious action and healthy growth. But already enough is known to form the basis of a science of education.