

In regard to the order of studies in general, my observation has led me to the conclusion that the practical with a child precedes the theoretic, up to a certain point, and beyond that the theoretic must precede the practical. When a child first learns to talk, he speaks purely by imitation and after many futile efforts that result in inarticulate sounds. Later on, when he learns the science of voice culture and of articulation, his speech ceases to be mechanical and becomes intelligent. The meaning of words he learns first by a sort of guess. By association certain sounds come to represent certain objects; a wider experience teaches him that the same name can apply to similar objects; and by degrees he is able to discover that particular object from its name, to know it in itself. Further he learns that certain words are names of objects, and others, names of actions. He learns to put these two classes of words together, by imitation first, and afterwards by rule. Thus he learns all the proper modification of words and their use.

In learning every new subject from the English alphabet up to the philosophy of criticism, he follows the same process.

First there is mere imitation, then a process of induction, then the knowledge of *a priori* principles, and finally their intelligent application to practical work. The first process of his education—imitation—is practical but limited. He is like the Chinaman who understands no English and is a practical cook by imitation, but his range is limited to such dishes as he has seen cooked. So a child's first knowledge is limited to what he has seen or heard. The second process, that of deriving principles, by induction, is the building up of a theory. It is the philosophic or pure science phase of any subject. The application of theory to practical work is

again practical, but unlimited except by the nature of the material used.

During the first stage of his education the child needs a model, a perfect model; during the second part, a wise guide; during the last part, hints from others; but his chief dependence is his own judgment. Too little attention is paid to the fact that a child's first teacher should be carefully chosen.

The lines between these three processes of learning are not sharply drawn, neither does the change take place at the same time with every individual. Just where the training should cease to be mechanical and become reasoning or intelligent must be determined by the teacher's intuition in individual cases, and by the judgment of the superintendent in the case of classes in schools. By observation and experience one can arrive, after a considerable time, at a rough estimate of the average age when the character of the instruction should change from dogmatic to experimental.

Turning now to the study of English language and literature, we find certain parts purely mechanical, and therefore to be relegated to the primary process of education, and others, partly mechanical. Writing, or the formation of letters, is almost purely by imitation, and proficiency is the result of constant practice; this is one of the first things a child should be taught.

Spelling in modern English is arbitrary and therefore must be learned largely from imitation. If a child has failed to learn to spell in this way, he may help himself by rules, but usually the exceptions to the rules are the very words he can never learn to spell. The habit of imitation must be cultivated in oral spelling as well as in written.

I was going to say that the child who reaches the eighth grade without