

THESIS.

Subject, Apperception

Name, Ja a. Milliron

Apperception is the process by which we get new ideas by means of old ones. Two persons looking upon an object presented to their minds for the first time receive entirely different impressions. When a machinist looks upon a machine he sees infinitely more than any other person. This is due to the fact that the presented material bears a relation to that which is already in the mind.

Once a man took an Indian to a large city and intended to show him the great and novel sights. But to the utter amazement of the man, the Indian passed along the street entirely indifferent to the great sights and attractive objects that continuously to appear

before them. Whenever they came to a small dingy-looking hut the Indian would break out in delight at it and it became the object of interest and attraction.

This was easily accounted for. The great sights, the like of which the Indian never saw before, were entirely too vast to bear any connection with the ideas that were in the mind of the Indian, and could not be appreciated; while the dirty huts resembled the wigwags of the Indians and could be easily understood by him.

Again, two people visit the battle field of Gettysburg, one of whom is acquainted with American history, the other is not. The last sees nothing but a broad expanse of rugged

country with here and there a wall or an embankment. It is no true until the entire scene fades from his memory and it no longer recurs to him. What does the field reveal to the other person who is a student in American history? It opens the whole American history and the impressions are indelibly fixed upon the mind. In presenting a new subject the teacher should aim to connect the new with the old. The hill that stands near the pupil's home should be taught before the great mountains are taken up. The brook that flows through the pupil's yard should be taught before we attempt to teach the river.

In teaching history, we should begin with local history with which the student is acquainted

and from that go to universal. The pupil will then have a better understanding of history and will not, as is generally the case, think history is something ^{pertaining} to far off places, while things, occurring daily at his home, make history. A large amount of inattention and inactivity on the part of the pupil is due largely to the lack of a proper connection between the old and the new.

If the new material was properly classified and placed in a proper relation to the school, a large amount of the difficulties, that are encountered in introducing work which is somewhat different to that already studied, would disappear.

Another great evil that may occur if the connection between the

old, and the new is not attended to. That is, the evil of cramming knowledge into the minds of children. If the studies of children are not simplified (which is only seeking out relations), giving the mind leisure to work by itself on the material prescribed to it by the teacher, the thinking faculty on which all progress depends, will be paralyzed, and dead knowledge will be a substitute for living. The mind will become an inactive recipient of knowledge, only able to impart again what has been stuffed into it, and unable utterly to make fresh combinations and discoveries. Thus the active and constructive powers of the mind are destroyed.

The great art of the schoolroom is finding the links and connections between the isolated facts and make

the child see what seems quite new is only an extension of what is already in the mind. This should be true especially in history. The object in this study should be to present facts in organic relation to each other instead of getting them learned by heart as a list of disconnected names.

Children as a rule note resemblances quicker than older people. This is due to the limited amount of impressions that they have, to which they can compare the new ones; but many times they refer them to the wrong group and misinterpreted impressions follow. Besides, the child does not distinguish between objects and self - between body and soul, and he attributes properties and activities that belong only to self to

objects. He gives life to inanimate things and believes objects are affected like himself. The child is in a stage in which the real and unreal are blurred—hence the reading and teaching of fairy tales are very profitable at this stage! The early condition of childhood is not exactness, and if we deprive them of fables and fairy stories we destroy the imagination which is such an important factor in our social life. The basis of sympathy is lost if the imagination of the child is neglected.

Bibliography

"Apperception" by Rooper

"Gen. Method" by McMurry - Chap. VI.

Psychology "Dewey - pp. 85-148

" "McLellan " 65-73.

" "James VOL II. pp. 107-131-