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A TALK ON TEACHING[1]

IN speaking to you to-day upon the subject of teaching, I shall try to present some considerations, suggested by my own experience, in regard to the application of educational principles to our own problems. Much of what I shall say will doubtless be familiar to a body of teachers like yourselves. Yet it is perhaps desirable that even the commonplaces of education be brought before us from time to time; for, though we recognize the abstract principles that should be followed, yet it is only by constant attention to them that we shall succeed in making them the real foundation of our courses of instruction.

Throughout our considerations we must keep in view the aim of the education for which the institute stands. In regard to this there is, I believe, little difference of opinion. The aim is to produce men who have the power to solve the industrial, engineering and scientific problems of the day—men who shall originate and not merely execute. The fundamental question is, then, How shall we develop this power? It is *power* that counts, and not *knowledge*. The ultimate test is what a man can *do*, not what he *knows;* and this is the test we should apply to our students upon the completion of each subject of in-

[1] Given at a conference of members of the instructing staff of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on March 20, 1908. To Professor H. G. Pearson I desire to express my great indebtedness for his suggestions and assistance in connection with the preparation of this paper for the printer.