



The School



Measuring in Education

The immemorial use of examinations proves that the possibility of measuring in education has always been recognized, but the method of measuring has changed with the contrivance of and experimentation in "mental tests." According to the old method the aim of the examiner was principally to measure information; the new way tends more and more to test ability.

After tireless experimentation with thousands of children, investigators in education and sociology have tabulated the basic notions underlying human experience and conduct and subjected to standard measurements the fundamental abilities to read, observe, remember, judge, reason and the like that the human individual should possess at various stages, say from his sixth to his eighteenth year. These stages mark the successive development of mental age.

For educational purposes the test is carried a step further. Distinct grades of ability in reading, arithmetic and the like have been formulated on a basis of mental age. And by applying these grades to individual children it can be found whether, for instance, a child has a reading capacity corresponding to his chronological and mental ages, whether he is doing work befitting his mental powers, how fast he is progressing, and just what are the defects in the pupil's learning process or the teacher's method of instruction.

The benefits obtained from measuring in education have greatly impressed teachers, and given the impulse to an ever-increasing adoption of it as a point of reliable technique. It is forcing teachers to recognize that the "retarded pupil" is not the dull child who is not advanced but the bright pupil whom the present grading system fails to advance quickly enough. It will base the grading system not on the chronological age but on the mental or educational age, and it will score reports not on the amount of information or skill of which the pupil gives evidence but on the relative proportion that his various mental powers and their present state of development bear to his educational achievements.