

**GROWTH DURING
SCHOOL AGE,
ITS APPLICATION TO
EDUCATION**

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Growth during school age, its application to education by Paul Godin & Samuel L. Eby

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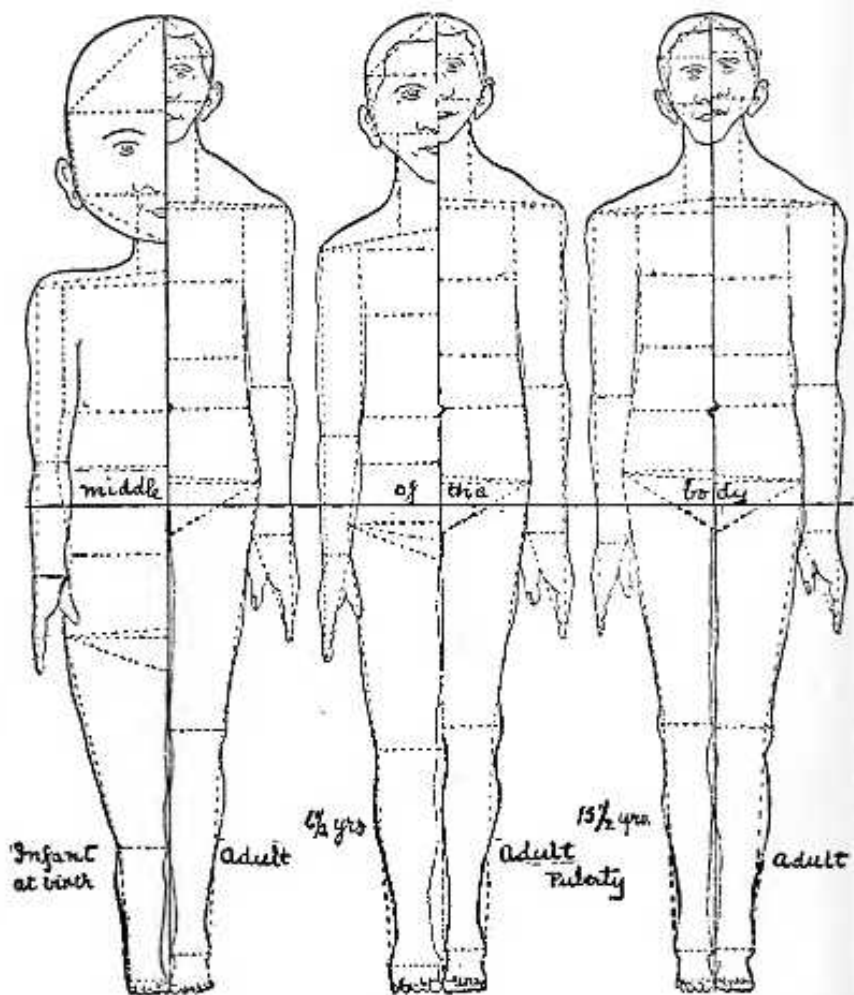


PLATE I.—Proportions of the diverse segments of the body compared to height (= 100) at the ages of evolution.

GROWTH DURING SCHOOL AGE

ITS APPLICATION TO EDUCATION

BY

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TO THE
ASSOCIATION

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" . . . Ce qui fait l'intérêt, pour l'instituteur, des phénomènes de croissance physique, c'est qu'ils ont une répercussion sur les fonctions psychiques et sur l'énergie du travail mental. . . . "

ED. CLAPARÈDE,
(*Psychologie de l'enfant*, 4me édit., p. 155)

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THIS translation of Doctor Godin's *La croissance pendant l'âge scolaire* is presented to American students of education for the purpose, first, of introducing the writings of a Frenchman who has long been a student of scientific education. Nearly forty years ago the author began the study of education. He has written much and many of his works have won recognition from the highest scientific societies in France. The author merits a wider circle of acquaintances in the United States of America than he has apparently enjoyed up to the present time. A second purpose is to direct greater attention to the contributions to the theory and practice of education in France. The translator inclines to the thought that American educators have tended too much to neglect French educational practice in the study of education. A more careful study of the work of the French along the line of scientific education will prove fruitful to American teachers and educators.

In itself this work of Doctor Godin should prove very valuable, first, for its scientific method. Within the last decade or two more emphasis has been placed on collecting statistics on physical growth and development of adolescents. Much of this work has yielded no valuable scientific results. Many figures and much data have been gathered but the method of collecting them has been such that the conclusions based upon them are frequently unreliable or unwarranted. This is especially true in respect of measurements of physical growth of adolescents. Measuring a large

group of twelve-year-olds or fourteen-year-olds and then determining medians or averages of weights and heights bears no fruitful results, if, as has very frequently been the case, the measurement is made once for all. It may mean something or it may mean nothing to compare the measurements of a particular individual with the medians of a large group. Whatever it may mean, it gives no significant assistance in the method of educational direction; it gives no insight into the disposition and nature of the particular individual whom the teacher is trying to educate. The only physical measurements worth while are those which admit of comparisons with previous states of development of the same individual. Such comparisons can be valid only when repeated measurements are taken at regular intervals. These repeated measurements are necessary in order to enable the teacher and educator to know the child intimately and profoundly; it makes possible a degree of individualization of education unknown in the past. In its final analysis successful direction of education depends largely upon its individualization. It is along this line that every child—the supernormal, the normal, and the subnormal—will be enabled to realize his whole self. The work here presented is an example of the method of the individualization of educational practice.

The value of educational measurements is summed up in a recent publication.¹ Doctor Godin's work is a model of scientific procedure in educational measurements and avoids precisely the errors pointed out by that writer. It points the way which educators must follow if these failures and errors are to be avoided and corrected.

In the second place, the work is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of adolescence. Of the many books on

¹ Strayer and Norsworthy: "How to Teach," p. 155f.