

Views of Locality

GEOGRAPHY.

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*Teacher's Manual of
Method and Organisation
Adapted To The Primary Schools of
Great Britain, Ireland, and The Colonies.*

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Geography may be treated of in two ways. We may teach geography either synthetically or analytically. We can either begin with general views of the whole surface of the earth, and descend gradually to the most minute description of each portion of it, or we can, on the contrary, set out from the spot on which we stand, describing the school and school-grounds, then the immediate neighbourhood, then the townland, the parish, barony, county, country, &c. &c. ; each new subject being more extended than its predecessor, until, in the end, we embrace the whole world and all that dwell upon it. The one plan enters upon the geographical study of the earth by giving at first the broadest outlines merely of the continents, oceans, &c., and then gradually fills up the picture ; while the other treats first of the topography of the neighbourhood, and lastly of the relative position, &c. of countries when connected as a whole.

Both practiced but first best. Both these plans have been practised, but the first alone has been successful ; for, however good the second may be in theory (and very many arguments can be brought forward to show that in theory at least it is excellent), it is found in practice that it requires men possessed of more than the usual intelligence of teachers to carry it out successfully. It requires special maps and diagrams of an expensive kind, and necessarily varying for each school ; and it requires also from the children a regularity of attendance and an amount of attention to school duties much beyond what experience has shown it right to expect.

From what the synthetical system arose. This system arose from supposing that what is naturally most interesting to us, and with which we are most frequently brought in contact, should not only be the best known but the first known. But this is not always the case ; for, as John Norris says, ‘ It is one thing to state that a thing *deserves* to be known, and another to say that it is learning and wisdom to know it.’ I am very much inclined to coincide with Mr. Gordon, when he says, ‘ It is surely a more liberal and improving knowledge which embraces, though in a very general manner, the great features of the entire surface of the earth, than that which is limited to an acquaintance, not very minute, with the topography of any of its political divisions, however much recommended by the accident of a personal relation to it.’

Knowledge of other countries very valuable. There is no doubt but that our own country and our own neighbourhood are naturally more interesting to us than any other ; but will a knowledge of them, in this age of change and emigration, be more useful ? And, if not, would the time spent upon the acquisition of all their minute details not have been better spent in obtaining general views of the world—its countries, its people, its animals, vegetables, minerals, &c. ?

Our thoughts are oftener on foreign countries than on our own. Steam and the electric telegraph have so extended the facilities of communication, have so enlarged the commerce of the world, and so bound nations and people to each other, that we no longer feel and act as when isolated in single spots ; we think as frequently of Australia, of America, of France, if not even more so, as of our own land ; and therefore geography, to be practical, must embrace a large area, even if the knowledge so scattered be not so deep—and this especially in primary schools, in which the pupils remain so short a time.

We must, however, appeal to topography of locality first. In carrying out the analytical, or descending system, we cannot, however, wholly reject the other, which I may call the topographical system of teaching geography. The terms *city, country, continent, river, mountain, &c.* do not, in general, convey correct ideas of the things themselves to the minds of children ; and as true ideas are essential, and only to be satisfactorily obtained by a judicious extension of the child's views of the locality in which he lives, we must, to be intelligible, appeal to topography first, not as a system of teaching, but only as a means of explanation of certain terms.

Mr. Moseley's views on this. The following admirable remarks from Mr. Moseley's Report for 1845 [1] prove the necessity for such a course, and show how it is to be done :—

‘ To understand the difficulties under which a child labours, we have only to consider how many things go to our own conception of a distant region. The map serves, indeed, to define the idea we have of it, to give it vividness and completeness ; but it does not originate it.

‘ We already know what *a* country is, which the poor child does not. When a *country* is pointed out by name to him upon the map, and he has learned to tell how, in respect to the four cardinal points, it is bounded by other countries, and what are the names of its rivers and mountains and chief towns, his memory may have been largely taxed, and yet his principal idea of the country may, nevertheless, remain in a great degree identified with an irregular figure upon a piece of paper. A vast chasm is interposed in the child's mind between the objects with which he is himself familiar, and those of which, in such instruction, he is required to conceive the existence—a chasm which his imagination is not strong enough to bear him over.

‘ His conceptions are too vague and too incoherent to be separated from the material things of which they have been formed, or to be presented to the imagination, and made the subject of comparison, of analogy, of accumulation, and of invention.’

Must first teach him to observe. ‘ The first step in his education is to teach him to *observe*. This accomplished, and the child knowing at length adequately, *for the purpose in hand*, the characteristic features of that portion of the earth's surface which is within the compass of a day's journey, its varieties of elevation and aspect, its hills, valleys, and streams, his attention

may be directed to the agrarian divisions of his parish, the fields and holdings which unite to form it. The boundaries of these, with which his memory is familiar, will convey to him his first idea of a map and its uses ; that idea will, moreover, be precise, and truthful. The next step might make him acquainted with the watershed of the district, and then the teacher would bring under his view the useful productions which it is made to yield by labour, whether pastoral or agricultural or mineral, associated as these are with the characteristic features of its surface level, its climate, drainage, aspect, and soil. Then the pursuits of its inhabitants, whether agricultural or manufacturing or commercial, in alliance with these and dependent upon them. Next, the domain of Natural History may be made to yield much for his instruction, in respect to the infinite variety of animal and vegetable forms which are assembled within the reach of his immediate observation, the birds which frequent that region, the domestic and wild animals, some of the tribes of insects, the commoner plants which grow around him, and the different kinds of trees. It is not proposed to burden the child's mind, in respect to any of these matters, with scientific distinctions or a hard nomenclature ; all that is sought is a knowledge of them in their *ordinary relations*—such a knowledge as a child acquires in respect to those other things with which he is most familiar.

Explanation of certain terms. ‘ Long before the teacher has exhausted this field of knowledge, he will, however, have become sensible of the expediency of making excursions beyond it. The idea which a child associates with a farm or field, now firm and consistent, will readily separate itself from that locality, and become the idea of a *tract* of land, having prescribed limits and a definite form and boundary and bearings, as to the four cardinal points. And by a process of accumulation, to which his imagination will easily lend its aid, this abstract perception or idea of a limited portion of the earth's surface maybe made to pass into the conception of a far-extended *country*, the relations of whose lesser political divisions to the whole are those of the individual properties and holdings to the whole parish. The village mill-stream may become, by a like process, a *stream*, and have an existence in the mind separated from the locality. In thought, he can add many such to one another, and then you may speak to him of the Thames and the Rhine and the Danube, with a probability of interesting him, and with the certainty of being understood. So the high ground, whence this and some sister brook pursue their course through neighbouring valleys, will convey to him the idea of the *watershed* of a continent. His conception of a *mountain system* may be reached by an easy and natural progression, the first step of which is a hill familiar to his earliest recollections. A neighbouring canal or navigable river will supply to him the idea of *water communication* ; a streamlet, tributary to some mill-pond, will suggest to his imagination the widened mouth by which a great river opens into the sea ; and the idea a *port* on the shores of which it will be easy to collect in imagination a commercial community. A mud bank will instruct him faithfully as to the formation and continued enlargement of a *delta*, and account for the richness of its soil and the exuberance of its vegetation.

Making geography interesting to children. ‘ Geography acquires its full value as a branch of education only when it loses the character of an accumulation of facts, undigested by the child's mind, but heaped up in his memory, linked by no association with the world of thought and of action which immediately surrounds it, or with that which is within it. Tell the child to observe the lines of the map which hangs perpetually before his eyes, and talk to him only of the *names* of the places indicated upon it, and you will soon weary his attention ; but speak to him of the living men who inhabit any of these places, tell him of their stature and aspect and dress and ways of life and of their forms of worship—speak of the climate of that country, of the forms of vegetable and animal life with which his eye would be conversant if

he dwelt there, of the trees and flowers that grow there, and of the birds and beasts—and you will carry his interest with you.’

Value of this early training as a preparatory step. By such training, the pupils will not only learn to form true notions of the terms generally used in describing countries, but they will come to understand what is really meant by a *map* of a country. And this is essential when we consider how frequently we must appeal to the map when teaching geography.

The first map. The first map used ought to be a rough sketch of the neighbourhood [2] in which the school is situated, and this chiefly to show to the children what is meant by the word *map* ; but the next ought to be a map, not of any particular country, but of the world, on the principle already explained of giving, first, broad ideas of the continents and oceans, and of their relative positions, and then descending to particulars.

First lesson on it described. The first lesson on it should consist of the very simple one of assisting the children to distinguish the coloured from the uncoloured or white parts of the map. The very youngest children will be capable of learning to do this. The only error they are likely to make is to point to the white portion outside the circular black lines which bound the hemispheres.

Second lesson. They are next to learn to distinguish the different portions of coloured surface from each other—to trace, in fact, the boundaries of each. Their attention may then be directed to the thick black irregular lines, and other peculiar marks traced here and there over the map. They are next to learn that the coloured part represents land, and the uncoloured part water, and that the dark shadings referred to represent *mountains, hills, &c.* They should then be called upon to point out themselves the large portions of land, and the various mountain chains, &c., scattered over the map. They may then be told the names of the countries, and be called upon to point out each when its name is mentioned.

Third lesson. Their attention may next be called to the fact that the uncoloured parts, which represent water, are all connected together like one body, but that nevertheless those portions of it that lie between the different divisions of land get different names, each, however, being called an *ocean*. For instance, that part of the water which appears on a map *above* Europe, Asia, and America, is called the Arctic, or Northern Ocean ; the part *below* Asia is called the Indian Ocean ; the part between America and Europe or Africa is called the Atlantic Ocean ; the part to the *left hand* of America and *right hand* of Asia is called the Pacific: while the part *below* America, Africa, and New Holland is called the Southern, or Antarctic Ocean. The small hinged globe [3] may now be used to show that the Arctic, the Pacific, and the Antarctic Oceans are not in reality divided, though each appears in two different places on the map. In fact, that they cannot be divided, as there is no land by which any separation could be effected. When familiar with the appearance of the *oceans*, their attention may also be called to the other portions of water on the earth’s surface, that is, to *lakes* and *rivers*, and in connection with this they may be told that all the visible water on the surface of the globe is contained in these three—in the oceans (with their subdivisions), in the lakes, and in the rivers.

Fourth lesson. In this lesson the terms *above, below, to the right hand, and to the left hand*, are used. They should now be told that for these terms are substituted the technical terms, North, South, East, and West, which, so far as a map is concerned, express exactly the same sense. They should be made perfectly familiar with the use of these as applied to a map,

and for this purpose they might be got to show the country painted *above* Africa, *below* Europe, to the *right hand* of Africa, to the *left hand* of Asia, &c. ; and then to show the country to the *north* of Africa, to the *south* of Europe, to the *east* of Africa, and to the *west* of Asia, their attention being called to the fact that the answer in each case is the same.

Cardinal points. The true meaning of the terms north, south, east, and west is of course different. It is now the time to show them what these terms mean when applied to the earth itself instead of to the map. This should be done by reference to the Sun. (See Dean Dawes' 'Hints,' page 6, for very useful suggestions to enable a child to gain a good knowledge of the four cardinal points.)

Should point to the actual position of each country on the earth. When they have acquired this information, they may be told that any country lying to the north of another is painted *above* it on the map, or if to the south it is painted *below* it, and so on with the other points ; but they should be made invariably, in the beginning, to point out not only the position of each country on the map, but its actual direction on the globe from where they are standing at the time. If the map were placed on the north wall of the school, some assistance might be afforded, as the countries will then be to the east and west, as they are actually upon the earth's surface.

Next Lessons. As the pupils have thus far learned the names and relative positions of the continents and oceans, they should now be taught their chief subdivisions—the most marked in outline of the several countries in each continent, and the largest of the several bays, gulfs, and seas belonging to each ocean. They will then learn their less prominent divisions, together with the names of the chief capes, mountains, lakes, rivers, &c., throughout the world.

Nature of their answers. In answering upon this they should tell about a *country*, its name and position ; as Siberia to the north of Asia, China to the south-east, &c. About a *cape*, its name and position ; as Cape of Good Hope to the south of Africa, Cape Horn to the south of South America, &c. About a *mountain*, its name, position, and direction ; as the Rocky Mountains to the west of North America, running from north to south. About a *river*, its source, direction, and ending ; as the Amazon, rising in the Andes Mountains, flowing easterly into the Atlantic Ocean, near the Equator. While, as regards the *oceans*, they should be able to name their subdivisions in order, and to tell what the straits and channels in each ocean separate and connect.

Definitions of terms. In connection with this, they should learn the definitions of the several geographical terms ; as island, lake, river, gulf, strait, isthmus, continent, &c., *and always with reference to the map.* A child, for instance, is told that ' an isthmus is a narrow piece of land joining two larger portions,' and then several instances should be shown to him on the map ; after which he should be called upon to discover others for himself, correcting him in each case when wrong. He should see that the land must not only connect, but be narrower than what it joins, before we can call it an isthmus. Thus Suez, Panama, Corinth, are isthmuses, because they join pieces of land broader than themselves ; while, on the other hand, the chain of the Pyrenees, though in strictness the connecting link between France and Spain, is not an isthmus, for though it connects, as all isthmuses do, it is too large relatively to what it joins to be included under the definition.

In the same way can be explained the peculiarities of a strait, a bay, a gulf, a lake, an island, &c.

When a definition is forgotten, appeal to map. When a child happens to forget a definition, it is better to refer him to the map than to tell it to him. Thus, if he forget what a *lake* is, a number of lakes should be shown to him, and from a comparison of these he should be assisted to draw for himself the definition required. If he succeed, it is not likely that he will ever again forget it.

Carelessness in pointing to name Instead of the place. Let me now guard the teachers against a carelessness, too often met with in the use of the maps, which permits the child to point to the *name* of what he is desired to show, instead of to its actual *place*. I have seen many children, when told to point out the Cape of Good Hope, for instance, who pointed merely to the word cape, or to the whole expression ‘Cape of Good Hope,’ although these words are printed on the *white* surface representing water. They were actually, therefore, pointing to an ocean instead of to a cape, and, as found upon examination to be the case, they were learning to look upon a cape as water, instead of land. This error more frequently happens, and is probably a more frequent cause of inaccuracies, in pointing out towns. Those children neither know the true position or the comparative magnitude of what they point out, who represent one town by a long name like St Petersburg or Constantinople, and another by the short one Paris or London. Nor, when they mistake where the letters are printed for the position of the town itself, can they find the river upon which it is built, or, very frequently, the county or country in which it is. Such errors are the result of carelessness or injurious haste, and admit of no apology. I think it is sufficient, however, merely to point them out, to get them removed.

Danger of using the map. The danger of using the map is that the teaching may degenerate into mere ‘map teaching.’ It is one thing, however, to teach the map and another to teach geography. A knowledge of geography is not secured by the mere pointing out of places, or in telling their names and relative positions as they appear; however well the map may be known, it is but a picture after all, and geography does not treat of pictures, but of real land and water. No opportunity, therefore, should be omitted of withdrawing the minds of the class from the map, to fix them on that which it is supposed to represent. This will be difficult if the master treat geography merely as consisting of so many names of rivers, countries, lakes, &c.; but if, remembering that all knowledge has man himself and his different relations for its object, and that every study becomes interesting and valuable in proportion as it is directed to that end, he treats, in his geographical lessons, of the productions of the world, of its different climates, of the exploration of mariners, the acquisition of warriors, the extent and variety of commerce, the relationship existing, whether friendly or unfriendly, amongst the different families of the earth, of the manners and customs of the people, &c., he will have no difficulty in withdrawing the child’s mind from the picture to the reality. And in proportion as his illustrations are vivid and his descriptions interesting, his labour will be less.

What should be combined with each lesson on the map. During the whole time, therefore, that he is teaching the map—for it is necessary to teach the map as well as to teach geography—care should be taken to combine with each lesson as many little facts, within the comprehension of the children and suitable to the growth of their mind, as will tend to *realise* the subject, and make it interesting and instructive. They may be told, as already stated, the productions of each country—under the three heads of animal, vegetable, and mineral—and which of them form the chief exports, with what country each chiefly trades, and for what

articles. They should also learn the different races and habits of the people ; the various causes which retain them in one spot, as in China ; or determine them upon particular countries, as Australia, California, &c., with the routes pursued by emigrants and those engaged in commerce, in going from place to place ; they should also know the influence of geographical position, or the proximity to deserts, mountains, &c., upon temperature, upon health, upon the races of animals, and the growth of plants. The mineral wealth of the large mountain chains, the character of the rivers rising in them, whether rapid and shallow, slow and deep, navigable or not, and if navigable, the towns which have sprung upon their banks, together with their commercial character, should also form portions of the lessons. [4] Each lesson must become more minute, and each description more strictly accurate and scientific.

When giving those facts, the teacher should take every occasion to make the children compare them with what they already know, *or with what they had observed in their own country and neighbourhoods*. It is by such a comparison that knowledge of distant things and places is made real and instructive.

A country once well described becomes a standard. It is a good plan to describe one country well, and make it the standard for most others. ‘ If any one country were well taught, its size made fully apparent, its natural features all placed as a picture before the mind, its productions, its people, its usages, its laws, its religion, all impressed and explained, it would become a kind of central point of light and knowledge, from which the scholar could proceed to other countries, until he has, as it were, paced the globe, circumnavigated its oceans, and seen in his mind’s eye everything remarkable as he passed onwards.’

‘ Lively narratives of travellers and tourists might be used with great advantage in teaching geography to primary schools. The description of a country like Switzerland, its mountains, lakes, plains, glaciers, waterfalls, avalanches, smiling valleys, and eternal snows, all accompanied with a proper map and a description of the habits, history, and government of the people, would certainly do far more to instruct the mind than a catalogue of boundaries and divisions involving a number of names to which no mental imagery whatever is attached. The comparison of Switzerland, again, with a country like Holland, would draw forth various considerations highly instructive ; while the mere localities would be far more vividly than ever impressed upon the mind, by connecting them with the mighty stream which rolls from the summits of the one, and loses itself in the marshes of the other.’ [5]

This subject requires a great deal of general knowledge. Geography is one of the most valuable of studies, as it deals with so many various subjects of the most practical kind. It instructs, and while it instructs it humanises, by showing us how intimately we are all bound together in working out a common end. There is scarcely any subject, however, which requires from the master a greater amount of general knowledge, or a greater tact in bringing his information to bear upon each day’s lesson ; but, on the other hand, there is scarcely any subject in which pupils take so much delight, or in which they make such gratifying progress, when it is rationally and carefully taught—taught not as a system of names, but as an interpretation of nature and art.

Teachers should not wholly neglect names, &c. In making geography descriptive, the teachers must not, however, fall into the extreme of making it purely so. It is essentially necessary to teach the *names* of places, of mountains, rivers, oceans, seas, and the whole topography of the map, as a picture of what in reality exists, as it is to teach the facts to which I have previously alluded ; but instead of teaching the names by themselves, they should be

joined with everything which will create in the minds of the children an interest and a pleasure, so that, thus associated, they may be permanently remembered. [6]

What a knowledge of geography is. The following extract from Dr. Arnold's 'Lectures on History,' places the connection between the two portions of geography in a clear light, while at the same time it contains some hints upon the general objects of the study, which will be of assistance to the teachers :—

' Let us consider a little what a knowledge of geography is. First, I grant, that it is a knowledge of the relative position and distance of places from one another, and by places I mean either towns or the habitations of particular tribes or nations, for I think our first notion of a map is that of a plan of the dwellings of the human race. We connect it strictly with man and with man's history, and here I believe with many persons geography stops. They have an idea of the shape, relative position, and distance of different countries, and of the position, that is, in respect to the points of the compass, and mutual distance of the principal towns. Everyone, for instance, has a notion of the shapes of France and Italy : that one is situated to the north-west of the other, and that their frontiers join ; and again, everyone knows that Paris is situated in the north of France, Bordeaux in the south-west ; that Venice lies in the north-east corner of Italy, and Rome nearly in the middle, between north and south, towards the western sea. This much of geography is indeed indispensable to the simplest understanding of history, and this kind of knowledge extending over more or less countries, as it may be, and embracing with more or less minuteness the divisions, provinces, and positions of the smaller towns, is that which passes, I believe, with many for a knowledge of geography.

' Yet you will observe that this knowledge *does not touch the earth itself*, but only the dwellings of men upon it. It regards the shapes of a certain number of great national estates, if I may so call them, the limits of which, like those of individuals' property, have often respect to no natural boundary, but are purely arbitrary. A real knowledge of geography embraces at once a knowledge of the earth, and of the dwellings of man upon it. It stretches out one hand to history, the other to geology and physiology. It is just that part of the dominion of knowledge where the students of physical and of moral science meet together.'

He adds, ' The deeper the knowledge the easier it is remembered. I find it extremely difficult to remember the position of towns when I have no other associations with them than their situation relative to each other. But let me once understand the *real* geography of a country ; its organic structure, the form of its skeleton,—that is, of its hills ; the magnitude and course of its veins and arteries—that is, of its streams and rivers ; let me conceive of it as a whole mass made up of connected parts, and the position of man's dwellings, varied in reference to these parts, becomes at once easily remembered, and lively and intelligible besides.'

If skeleton map were given, the pupils should be able to fill in the towns, &c. In fact, if the skeleton of a country were properly sketched out, if all its natural advantages and disadvantages were fully known, any intelligent child should, from merely knowing the general laws which determine man's residence in different places, be able to place, in the rough outline, without ever consulting the finished map, the majority of the towns and cities it actually possesses. The very effort to do this would be instructive, and even the failures could be made to yield valuable knowledge, by causing enquiry into the reasons for any discrepancy which might exist. [7]

Errors now met with i examining upon geography. In examining a class upon geography, the chief defect now apparent is a want of sequence and proper connection among the several questions. Most teachers begin, no matter with what class—with the highest as well as with the lowest—somewhat thus :—

1. What is a map ?
2. What is *this* map a picture of ?
3. How is the world divided ?
4. How many parts land ?
5. How many water ?
6. Where is the Equator?
7. Where is the tropic of Cancer, &c., &c.

All these forming the unvarying introduction to some such questions as these :—

1. Show me Europe.
2. Where is the Mediterranean Sea?
3. Point to the Cape of Good Hope.

Now this is very absurd. (1) Because if the queries suit one class, they cannot suit all. (2) The pupils learn the questions and answers by rote, and gradually cease to think upon the subject at all, answering merely mechanically. And (3) the questions are so separated as to destroy all connected thought, and to blend the impressions into a confused mass. At one time they ask about *a line*, at another about *a strait*, one time about *an ocean*, the next about *a mountain* ; one time about *a cape*, the next about *the poles*, going from question to question without any distinct purpose in view. This is exactly as if, in teaching grammar, the master asked a question, now about *a noun*, next about *a verb* ; now about *a vowel*, and again about *Syntax*.

Teacher should have a distinct object before him. In every lesson the teacher should have a distinct object to carry out, and to that he should adhere to the exclusion of everything else. Thus, if he wish to treat of the continents, or of the oceans, or of their subdivisions, or of the mountains of the world, or of its rivers, he may do so in each case, in one lesson or in several : or if he wish to show the natural connection between some of these, as between the shapes of the continents and the oceans, between the mountains and the rivers, between the rivers and the towns, &c, he may do so by grouping them judiciously with that end in view. In fact, if he wish to talk of land, well ; if of water, well ; and if of their connection, it is well also ; but he should know exactly, before he begins, about what he intends to talk, so that he may not run one subject into another. [8] His questions and the proper answers should form a connected catechism upon the subject-matter of the lesson, that is, when his object is to *teach*. When he is merely *examining*, it is different ; for as in this case he proposes to test what is known, and not to impart methodically arranged information, it is allowable to take a wider latitude, and not only allowable, but judicious.

Map to be rolled up in examining upon geography. In examining a class, if the object be to test whether the pupils know the *map* or not, the map should be exposed ; but if the object be to test whether they know *geography*, the map should be rolled up. The map is used for *teaching* geography, but not for *examining* upon it.

Two methods of testing the children's knowledge of what has been already taught to them.
(1) Let the teacher place a black-board beside the map selected, and having directed the class to confine their statements to some one branch—as either the rivers, peninsulas, or the countries, &c.—let him require each boy in turn to name and point out an example, and give some fact connected with it. This fact should be one which the child had already learnt from the master's teaching. The master should now write on the black-board the name of the example given, to serve as a guide for the closing part of the lesson. Thus, if the first child select the Danube (the map being Europe, and the subject the rivers), he may say, pointing to the map, ' The Danube is the largest river in Europe ; it rises in Baden, and flows east into the Black Sea.' The teacher will then write the word *Danube*, or an abbreviation of it, on the black-board. The next child may select the Volga, and in that case the master writes this word below the other ; and so on, until all the children have named examples.

When all have done so, the master should select any boy at random, and pointing to the first word written on the black-board, require him to trace the river out, and tell exactly what was first said of it. He will then call upon another child to do the same with the second name, and so on.

This plan of examination secures the attention of the class, and by the repetition involved, it fixes the information conveyed more firmly in the minds of all.

(2) Select the two boys from the class who are best informed on the maps. The class can then be separated into two divisions, having these boys as heads, by their alternate calling of the remaining pupils to either side. The abilities of the pupils will in this way be pretty fairly balanced. When thus arranged in two lines (A and B), the first boy in A asks a question of any boy on the opposite side, which if he answers requires no further action. The head in line B puts a question in the same way to any boy in division A, his own dignity and the teacher's interference always preventing his questioning opponents of marked inferiority. If the boy questioned is unable to give the answer, the questioner supplies it, and in return is questioned by the former, his failure in answering counterbalancing the defect on the other side, but provided he answers the defaulter in the first case becomes his prisoner, and takes his place behind his captor, having while in that position no voice in the competition. In the event of a boy having already secured a prisoner, he can save himself from imprisonment by setting the captive free. The questions are asked in this way alternately from side to side, the teacher-acting as umpire, and deciding the legitimacy of question, answer, and result. The field from which the queries are selected should be previously apportioned and adhered to in the lesson ; care being taken to reject questions on trivial or unimportant places, which the love of victory may incite the children to employ. Of course the division having the greater number of prisoners at the termination of the lesson carries the victory. This is called by the children, *prison-bar*, from its resemblance to that game ; and as they take great pleasure in it, it might be occasionally practised, especially on wet days, with considerable advantage.

When text-books are to be used. Text-books on geography, like text-books on grammar, are necessary merely to complete the picture whose chief features have been already sketched

out by oral teaching ; they should not, therefore, be put into the child's hands until he knows the Map of the World well. When this is the case, the text-books may be used to assist the maps—which are but text-books in another form—and the instruction must be more systematic and minute.

Order in which continents, &c., may be taught from them. It is difficult to say to which of the continents the teacher should first attend, and in what order they should follow each other, so as to provide, as well as possible, for the numerous cases in which children are forced to leave school before they learn a complete course. I think the following arrangement as good as any :—

Teach *first*. Europe, in connection with the child's own country.

Secondly. Asia—the broadest features not already known—together with the next most important part of the British Isles.

Thirdly. America, as Asia, in connection with the remaining part of the British Isles.

Fourthly. Africa and New Holland, and British Dependencies.

Finally. A minute knowledge of the continents ; with a revision of Great Britain and Ireland.

Such an arrangement introduces the child at an early stage to a knowledge of his country, and will therefore tend to remove the stigma, which is sometimes deservedly attached to many schools, that their pupils can give minute descriptions of Siberia or Patagonia, for instance, but cannot tell anything of the British Empire, or even of the counties, &c., of their native land.

Lessons for committal to be small. The lessons marked out for each evening's study should not be too large, and prior to the committal to memory the pupils should go over them upon the map—either the maps at the school, or atlases which for this purpose they should all be obliged to purchase. They will thus be able to get the lessons off more quickly and more correctly, and to understand them better.

Globe, use of, in the earlier lessons. Up till now I have merely referred to a globe once, and that to show the connection existing between portions of the same ocean and continent when separated on the map. Thus far I think it necessary in the beginning, and also probably to give the children true ideas of the position of different countries in respect to each other, and their distance asunder ; but, in my opinion, it is very far from correct to use a globe regularly from the first, or to commence geography at all by discussions upon the shape of the earth, its size, measurement, lines, &c.

A child's notion that the World is a plane may be allowed for some time. The child's notions of the world as a level surface, dotted here and there with hills and valleys, inasmuch as they are very natural and unproductive of any serious error, should be allowed to continue for some time. Very little good, if any, ever results from violently overthrowing the pre-conceived notions of a child, no matter how erroneous these notions may be ; they should be gradually corrected by the child himself. It will not do to tell him that he is wrong, and that a certain other thing is right. He should have the materials placed before him which will enable him to conclude for himself that he is so. When a child, for instance, supposes the world to be

a plane, he certainly makes a mistake ; but instead of blame, he is rather deserving of praise for having brought his senses to bear correctly upon the things around him. Everything he sees or knows tends to make him think so of the world, and it would be unnatural for him to think otherwise. He merely commits the error of judging from a paucity or incompleteness of data. The teacher's duty is, therefore, not only to tell him that he is wrong, but to place before him the facts he did not know of, and the very same mind that previously drew the wrong conclusion will now draw the correct one. It is on this account that I have recommended first the use of maps. As he advances, and is capable of understanding the proofs of the earth's sphericity, he may begin the study of globes and mathematical geography.

Proficiency for each class. It merely remains for me now to sketch out the proficiency of each class in accordance with what I have just written. Geography can be introduced at a very early age, and that without occupying much of the master's own time ; for, after the child has acquired correct notions of what is meant by the words town, country, &c., the map teaching may safely be left very much to monitors. Even without monitors, if the maps are exposed before their view, the children will be able to collect a good deal of information by themselves. Geography also forms an agreeable change from the other subjects of their school course ; but that the young children may not weary of it, their lesson should never be allowed to extend beyond fifteen or twenty minutes. The following is the *minimum* which, I think, every teacher should expect from his classes :—

1st. Should know the oceans, continents, and their relative positions.

2nd. The subdivisions of the oceans and continents, together with the outlines of Ireland (or England, or Scotland, as the case may be).

3rd. All this, together with the chief lakes, rivers, mountains, capes, &c., in the two maps—World and Ireland.

4th. In addition to this, the text-book of Europe and Ireland.

5th. The whole of the text-book fairly, but that part relating to the British Isles well ; and, in addition, a fair knowledge of Dr. Sullivan's ' Geography Generalised.'

[1] Min. of Council, 1845-6, vol. i. p. 238.

[2] The Ordnance Survey Maps would supply to each teacher, with great accuracy, a representation of his own neighbourhood, which he could easily enlarge so as to serve for a good school map.

[3] I allude to ' Malby's Semi-Terrestrial Globe,' manufactured for the Commissioners of National Education, Ireland.

[4] Mr. Combe, in his 'Notes on the United States of America' mentions the plan which a gentleman adopts to improve his sons in geography, and which I think may be followed with advantage by teachers. He desires one of his sons to read from the daily newspapers the list of ships which have arrived in the port of Boston (any other port would, of course, do). It specifies the places from which they have come, and the nature of the cargo. He then gets one to point the place out on the map ; another is designed to assign a reason why

it brings that particular cargo from that particular place. This leads to an explanation of climate, soil, and natural productions of that part of the globe ; and this is often followed up by descriptive particulars concerning the religion, government, manners, and customs of the people.

[5] Min. of Council, 1848-9, vol. ii. p. 469.

This will be found a difficult test for even advanced pupils, as geography is now taught in schools. I select a dozen or the ports mentioned in a Liverpool newspaper as carrying on a trade with Great Britain, and anyone who tries will find how few scholars could state where they are, or the nature of the cargo usually brought from them : Callao, Matamoros, Pensacola, Taganrog, Cardenas, Matanzas, Lagos, Massowah, Tamataive, Macao, Persambuco, and Stavanger.

[6] The names may be made interesting by an attention to their derivation. In fact, ‘ the *Etymology* of geographical names forms an important feature in this branch of knowledge. The name of a place often tells its condition or history ; and the explanation of the same, by calling into exercise the power of association increases the probability of its being remembered. Thus the name *Buenos Ayres* still shows the salubrity of the air of that town ; Sierra, the Spanish name for a range of hills, the saw-like appearance which it presents ; New York tells us that it was once a colony of *England*, and those who know that it was first called New *Amsterdam* know, too, that it was founded by the Dutch ; Virginia shows that it was colonised in the reign of our *virgin* queen, Elizabeth ; *Carolina*, during that of Charles (*Carolus*). The term *fell*, applied to mountains in the north of England, the south of Scotland, and to the islands of the north and west, shows that these parts of the country were occupied by some tribe or tribes of Scandinavian origin ; while *ben*, or *pen*, found in the most mountainous regions, confirms the facts of history, that these high grounds were unconquered by the northern invaders, and continued in possession of the original Celtic inhabitants. In thus finding out the cause of the name, the reason has been exercised, and the study rendered highly philosophical; and a science which has often been thought to consist only of lists of hard unmeaning words, has been made attractive in a more than usual degree.’— Min. of Council, 1846-7, vol. ii. p. 356.

[7] Certain conditions are given, from which certain consequences are to be inferred. Thus they are expected to discover that the rivers of Eastern Europe are slow, and of Western Europe rapid ; after having been told that the former have their rise at a slight elevation, and have a lengthened course, and the latter originate in the high land of Central Europe, at no great distance from the sea. Political and social geography are thus shown to be in a great degree dependent on physical geography ; the reason is seen why one country is agricultural and another commercial ; why a certain manufacture should be carried on in a particular locality in preference to every other ; and why an alteration in the mode of manufacture should involve a change in its seat. Thus, that Holland is agricultural, and England manufacturing ; that our cotton manufacture is carried on in South Lancashire and the edges of the neighbouring counties, and not in Lincolnshire ; that our manufactures generally are travelling north and west ; and that iron, which was once largely manufactured in Kent and Sussex, is now only smelted on the great coal fields ; are not merely so many facts, but highly interesting facts—interesting because regarded as effects, the causes of which are perceived, and have probably been discovered by the student himself.

[8] ‘ Several masters are now adopting the plan of first describing the great mountain ranges of a country, then the rivers rising on each side of the watershed and passing through the intervening valleys; next, the chief towns along their banks, and on the line of coast ; and lastly, the political divisions of which these towns are the capital, and with which their names are associated.’—*Min. of Council*, 1851, p. 1013.
See also ‘ Outlines of Geography,’ by Professor Pillans.

A manual of method and organization

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