

aided by wall maps and the school library, relieve the monotony of textbook teaching. If I should condense into the fewest words the intent of this part of my argument, they would be: "Avoid *verbatim* recitations; put something of life and nature into teaching."

Between the two extremes of superabundance and barrenness, a middle path must be selected by experience and good judgment. Facts that appear isolated must be bound together in their true relations; trivial matters must be lightly passed over; chapters of importance, in which the class finds difficulty, must be kept in hand and expounded till familiar. The best results of such a method can be gained only by a judgment so good and an experience so long, that nothing but the truly professional spirit of teaching, entered on as a life-work, will insure the improvement that we all desire and are striving for.

Lest some might misinterpret what I have just said, to mean that all memorizing of the facts of geography should be omitted, I must state explicitly that in geography, as in spelling, there seems to be no way of avoiding a large amount of memorizing, if the pupil is to have a sufficient fund of information with which to extend his own experience in later life. The labours of English spelling can be lightened by grouping words of similar derivation, as I used to learn them in my *Scholar's Companion*; but I cannot imagine any method by which the labour of learning to spell can be entirely done away with. So with geography; it is essential that every child should learn the names and positions of the larger geographical elements; but to learn them simply as recitations of words printed on the map is a fatal mistake. Several years must be included in the geographical course, during which the world has to be gone over and over, with more care

and thoroughness at each repetition, before the familiarity that we all should have with it can be gained. This labour cannot be omitted; but it may be lightened by judicious illustration. Still, there is no royal road. I have no recipe by which all but the easy parts of the subject can be omitted and yet have the pupil well taught. Wide information on the part of the teacher and attentive effort on the part of the pupil, are essentials to success; but the labour thus thrown on both need not be dull and stupefying.

How shall the teacher know what need not be taught? What are the unessentials in the routine work of geographical teaching? We may learn something here by asking one another a series of questions that children may have to learn at school. The small value of some of the questions is not so well indicated by our having forgotten the answers as by our not caring if we have forgotten. It is natural enough that many things learned at school should be forgotten afterward when the mind is occupied with other things. It must not be inferred that Latin and Greek should not be studied in school, because they are afterward forgotten; we are sorry enough if we cannot translate from the ancient languages when we meet them in words or passages. But this is not the case with the names of the branches of the Danube. Who cares whether he can at all repeat them in order? He may know that the Inn comes in from the Alps and the Theiss from the plains of Hungary; the others may be looked for on a map, if they are wanted. It is this indifference to the facts of routine geography that tells us of their small value. It is the easy recovery of them, when desired, that makes the memorizing of their names so useless. They appear clearly enough on the maps. Leave them there till wanted, and select from the many a few about