

conception of the geography of that river than most of our boys who have finished their school course have of the St. Lawrence or the Mississippi. If we can, therefore, interweave into our instruction in geography personal incident, historical fact, information respecting people and wild animals and vegetable products, and at the same time impress upon the class a clear conception of the shape and proportions of the country and its physical features, we will not only relieve the geography lesson of its dreariness, but render it what it ought to be—an intellectual and pleasurable exercise, which pupils will anticipate with delight, and for which they will prepare with readiness and zeal.

Doubtless our geographical education ought to begin at home, but it must not end there. "Canada first" is our motto here as it is in other matters, but we should not fail to remember that Canada constitutes only a small fraction of the earth's surface and contains a much smaller fraction of its population. The mother country, with its dependencies, and the neighboring republic, to which we are bound by so many ties; the empires, kingdoms and republics, on the other continents and upon this, all demand a share of our attention. And we have invariably found that the boy who possesses the most intimate knowledge of the geography of the world in general, is better versed, in all essential particulars, in that of his own country, than the boy who has never passed beyond its boundaries. The fact is, teachers find it hard to create enthusiasm in regard to what every one already imagines that he is sufficiently well acquainted with, and therefore prefer foreign to home subjects as an instrument in training the geographical tastes of their pupils. But in younger classes the subjects ought to be chiefly, though not entirely, Canadian, and the instruction imparted orally without text-book or preparation on the part of the pupil. Thus the danger would be avoided of creating a distaste for geography from the difficulty of pronouncing and remembering names when read as compared with the ease and impressiveness which accompany the living voice of the teacher. And even at this early stage we would recommend the practice of map-drawing, for not only would the children be usefully occupied, but the eye would be trained in form and comparison, and a fairly accurate and indelible picture of the country impressed upon the mind. Should this training be commenced early and prosecuted with vigor and skill throughout the period of school attendance, by home drawings from the map and school exercises from memory, the results would be highly satisfactory.

Map-drawing cannot be recommended too strongly

or advocated too strenuously. It is at the basis of all thorough teaching of geography. By its introduction when time is abundant and subjects are few, an ease in the use of pen and pencil is acquired which is of great service afterwards when more elaborate work is required. When from the senior pupils, when time is of great importance, a more detailed product is demanded, when the position, size and characteristics of one country are to be compared with those of another, and the physical features have to be delineated, products noted and towns marked down, the map can be sketched from memory with celerity and correctness, because frequent practice has produced a photograph on the mind which can be readily transferred to paper or slate; and the teacher, when he undertakes to give instruction in physical geography, and traces the course of ocean currents and winds, the distribution of man and other animals, and the configuration of the earth's surface, its mountains, plains, plateaus and volcanoes, will assuredly experience the comfort and satisfaction which are consequent upon a ready and accurate acquaintance with the details of geography already mastered; and we are confident that there are few successful teachers of history who have not availed themselves of its assistance in representing upon the blackboard the vicissitudes through which a country has passed, its losses and gains of territory, the campaigns of its generals and its decisive battles, and have failed to pronounce such a method inspiring and helpful.

In teaching geography great care must be taken to arrange the materials for each lesson. The sea coast, with its gulfs, bays and headlands, ought to be kept distant from the mountain and river systems, and these fixed in the memory before the chief towns are located. In noting the towns, by following the coastline, the teacher marks the seaport of the country, and while tracing the course of the rivers, the business marts of the interior. But as railways have in some degree taken the place of rivers as the great arteries of trade, and railway centres have expanded into towns, some of them of great size and importance, it is incumbent upon the teacher to include them in his scheme for the towns and to rank them as of equal importance with rivers. But here, as under all other heads in geography, the memory must not be burdened by an excess of names, many of them of little consequence. The teacher should aim at a more or less intimate acquaintance with the geography of a country, so that when towns, rivers or mountains are mentioned as the scene of incidents in the current history of the time, or are mentioned in the commercial or telegraphic column of the newspaper, they may be familiar, in name and locality. But when any country becomes of special interest—a scene of war, revolution or constitutional change, the opportunity may be laid