

A suggestion was offered in your *Monthly Paper* some months ago, that scholars should be encouraged to buy periodicals; but this will only be attended by a very limited success. In order, however, to secure reading at home, I have formed in my school, with the sanction and best wishes of my incumbent, a "Home Reading Society," the members of which must belong to either of the four upper classes, and pay a halfpenny per month. With the money so paid I purchase monthly periodicals, viz., *Pleasant Hours*, *Missionary Gleaner*, *Sunshine*, *Band of Hope*, and *Children's Friend*. These the members in turn take home to read, being allowed about two days for each number.

About sixteen members will quite pay expenses of one set of papers, and any schools could raise this number. I commenced with two set of periodicals and thirty-three members; this month I have forty-five members and three sets of periodicals. "Home Reading Society" is certainly a grand title for so small an undertaking; but my girls and boys are quite delighted at being members of the "Society," and so I am pleased I adopted it. In order to be fully successful, it will be necessary to speak occasionally to the upper classes on the benefit attending such home reading, and to show the cheapness of membership. The pictures, too, should be exhibited sometimes, and a story read from one of the papers.

It is impossible to estimate the good such a society may do even to the scholar's reading; but in addition to this there is the cultivation of the love of the beautiful, in setting before the family at home such splendid engravings as were in *Sunshine* of last month, and are in the *Children's Friend* and *Band of Hope* of this. There is the formation of a strong bond of union between home and the school; there is the inducement it affords to keep the family within doors of an evening; but above all there is the hope we may fairly, if prayerfully, entertain, that God will be pleased to employ it to His glory and to the good of the Church.—I am, &c., W.—[In *Eng. Nat. Soc. Monthly Paper*.

#### 4. READING ALOUD IN THE FAMILY.

Books and periodicals should be angels in every household. They are urns to bring us the golden fruits of thought and experience from other minds and other lands. As the fruits of the trees of the earth's soil are most enjoyed around the family board, so should those that mature upon mental and moral boughs be gathered around by the entire household. No home exercise could be more appropriate and pleasing than for one member to read aloud for the benefit of all. An author's ideas are energized by the confidence and love of the tender family affections, and every heart is open to the truth like the unfolded rose to receive the gathering dew. The ties of love between parents and children and brothers and sisters, are thus cemented yet more and more, and varied charms and pleasures are constantly opened through this medium to make a home a very paradise. If parents would introduce this exercise in their families, they would soon see the levity and giddiness that make up the conversation of too many circles giving way to refinement and chaste dignity. Read to your children, and encourage them to read to you, instead of reading your papers and books in silence, and in silence laying them away.—*West. Recorder*.

#### 5. A FARMERS' LIBRARY.

In conversing with an intelligent farmer a short time since, he told us that he attributed much of his success to his carefully reading upon the different departments of agriculture. In addition to a few reliable agricultural journals, he said he had collected what he calls his "Farmer's Library." He made it a point to understand the why and wherefore of the processes he was putting into practice. And he was correct. Farmers should read—should study more than they do. Every farmer should have a library. It need not be large or expensive, nor need it be purchased all at once. The reading of it need not detract one hour from the important labour of the field. But we insist that every farmer should have some scientific knowledge of the various operations he is daily performing, both for his own enjoyment and profit, and to be able to give a reason for everything he does on his land. His children should be taught the philosophy of agriculture more or less thoroughly, that they may be attached to the calling, and may make improvement on it.—*Clinton Co. Republican*.

### VI. Papers on Scientific Subjects.

#### 1. SCRAPS OF SCIENCE.

One of the most wonderful achievements of astronomers is the weighing of the bodies comprising the solar system. The mass of the sun is 359,551 times greater than that of the earth and moon, and 700 times greater than that of the united masses of all the planets.

A flash of lightning on the earth would be visible on the moon in a second and a quarter; on the sun in eight minutes; on Jupiter (when furthest from us) in twenty-five minutes; on Uranus in two hours; on Neptune in four hours and a quarter; on the star Vega, of the first magnitude, in 4,000 years; yet such stars are visible through the telescope!

La Place, the great French astronomer, says,—“I have ascertained that between the heavenly bodies all attractions are transmitted with a velocity which, if it be not infinite, surpasses several thousand times the velocity of light.” His annotator estimates that speed as being eight millions of times greater than that of light.

The circumference of the earth is 25,000 miles. A train travelling incessantly night and day, at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour, would require six weeks to go round it. A tunnel through the earth, from England to New Zealand, would be nearly 8,000 miles long.

The barking of dogs is an acquired hereditary instinct, supposed to have originated in an attempt to imitate the human voice. Wild dogs, and domestic breeds which have become wild, never bark, but only howl. Cats, which so disturb the inhabitants of civilized countries by their midnight "caterwaul," are, in their wild state in South America, quite silent.

The dark races of men have less nervous sensibility than the whites. They are not subject to nervous disease. They sleep sound when sick, nor does any mental disturbance keep them awake. They bear surgical operations much better than the whites.

A certain species of fungus has been known to attain the size of a gourd in one night; and it is calculated that the cellulose of which it is composed must amount to forty-seven thousand millions. If it grows in twelve hours, this would give four thousand millions per hour, or more than six millions per minute.

#### 2. POINTS OF COMPASS—LINES OF THE MAP.

It is important that all students in geography understand well and thoroughly the points of compass, and the meaning of the lines of latitude and longitude, and the great circles. Teach them that latitude is not imaginary, but evidence on the map of north and south, and all the evidence we have. How common it is to hear Cape Farewell described as the S.E. point of Greenland, when it is the southern point, and that portion of Asia usually found on maps of the Western Hemisphere as North-West of America, when it is West.

Teach a thorough knowledge of these lines, and why the curve is so much greater near the poles than near the equator. Teach also the use of the tropic and polar circles. Teach what phenomena occur annually there in the great economy of nature. Your pupils will relish such a lesson, and feel as if getting pay for their work—a very desirable feeling.

Ask your advanced classes in Geography, if they were standing at either of the poles which way from them would be north, south, east and west. Let them study a few days, and if a correct answer is not given, illustrate with the globe that at the north pole there is no north, and at the south pole there is no south, and that east and west is a circle passing around their feet—in other words, that at the north pole it is all south whichever way they turn, and vice versa. Feed your class upon some of the many wonders of the world—its physical facts, and less upon stale tortured definitions.

"Blame the culture, not the soil." Teach the use of all you introduce, and that nothing imaginary is connected with geography, unless false.—W. H. G., in *Wisconsin Journal of Education*.

#### 3. THE DRAWING TALENT IN CHILDREN.

"Please may I make pictures on my slate: I've learned all my lessons?" Teacher, did you never hear that inquiry from the lips of a pupil? Or, perhaps, in passing around the room, your attention has been arrested by the slate of some pupil filled with curious drawings. Did you never yourself, in youthful days, draw houses with partitions plainly visible on the outside, with chairs and sofas of doubtful strength filling the rooms; or imitate Squire Jones' long nose in an elaborate profile? What does this picture-love in children indicate? and shall its expression on slate and paper be allowed and cultivated, is the inquiry I would seek to make. The imagination in this, as in other respects, has been too much neglected in children. Picture drawing, if allowed at all, has been merely to occupy the attention of the smallest of the restless fingers. Let the child draw upon his slate or paper, What? Dogs with three legs, uncouth imitations of the human face and form, and trees which are any thing but graceful? Shall the time of the pupils be wasted in such nonsense? No, not this; but is there no need of training children in the common schools in the first principles of drawing? Teach them to make a straight line, and how these straight lines may be combined to form objects known and