

and the towns by dots. In all my experience, I never met with a child that could not thus be made to understand what was meant by a map, without having to be carried through a course of lessons on topography.

It is sometimes said that children are very often taught to repeat geographical terms which they do not understand,—that a child brought up in a town, for example, has no conception of what is meant by a mountain or a lake. I do not think many teachers will endorse this statement; theorists very often imagine difficulties which are never met with in practice. However tame the scenery of any neighbourhood may be, there is generally a hill, a stream, and a pond; and it is not difficult for the quick imagination of a child to magnify these into mountains, rivers and lakes, especially if the imagination is aided by a brief description on the part of the teacher.

Having explained to our pupils the nature of a map, we next inform them that a globe is a representation of the distribution of land and water throughout the world. A single illustration will suffice to show them that in whatever position a globe be held, only one half of its surface can be seen at once. I could then be explained that, in a map of the world, the globe is supposed to be divided into two equal parts, and the halves flattened and placed side by side. We might next draw the attention of the pupils to the great continents, and especially Europe, with the British Islands on the extreme verge of the Western Hemisphere—

Et penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos.

Then, turning to a map of Europe, we could show Britain on a larger scale, and point out the relative positions of other countries, with the names of which the children might be familiar. Lastly, we might turn to a map of England, and point out some of its great features, and, if possible, the position of the town in which the school was situated.

Arrangement of Lessons.

It will be seen that the lessons described above are but preliminary; the systematic study of geography should begin by our native country. Great care should be taken in arranging the lessons, so that the several parts of the subject come in their natural order. Our pupils would then see the connection between one part and another; their intelligence would be quickened, and their interest kept alive. So far as England is concerned, the following would seem to be a natural order: the boundaries and coast line, thus showing the shape of the country; then, the surface and minerals; next, rivers and lakes; then, climate and productions (vegetable and animal); next the people and their occupations; and lastly, the divisions and towns. The minerals ought to be taken along with the surface, because they depend upon the nature of the surface: mountains and hilly countries are generally rich in minerals, while in flat district these are rare. It is not wise to make too many divisions in a lesson, or in a course of lessons, for the continuity of the subject-matter is thus often lost. The teacher should also be on his guard against using one stereotyped form for all countries alike: for, if this be done, he is very often tempted to insert unimportant facts for the sake of symmetry. Care also should be taken, especially in treating of foreign countries, to make a judicious selection of facts. It seems a waste of time to tell a child very much about the army and navy of foreign countries, or the different houses of legislature, and the number of members in each: on the other hand, it might be interesting to him to learn something about the food, dress, and general condition of the people.

Physical Geography.

We have laid stress upon the importance of arranging the lessons on an intelligible principle, so as to show the dependence of one part of the subject-matter upon another. It is the neglect of this principle that has often brought the study into disrepute. Geography is looked upon as a means of acquiring a certain number of useful facts, but seldom as an instrument of intellectual training; and yet few subjects are better adapted to this purpose. When properly taught, it not only strengthens the memory, but it also simulates the imagination and quickens general intelligence. In order, however, that the true relation between one part of general geography and another should be properly understood, the pupils should have some knowledge of physical geography. It would be well, therefore, when they begin the geography of England, that they should also receive some elementary lessons in physical geography. In this way, they would become acquainted with certain general principles which would explain the facts they are learning, and would add both of their interest and value.

Another reason why the study of physical geography should be introduced as early as possible is, that it is only in this branch of the subject that we can take that wide view of the question which raises geography to the dignity of science. In descriptive geography we are necessarily confined to a limited area; but when we view the earth as a whole, we discern the intimate relation between one part of its structure and another. Taught by such men as Ritter and Guyot, we see that the apparently fortuitous distribution of land and water, the irregularities of the earth's surface, and the disposition of the mountain chains, have stamped a certain diversity of climate upon different parts of the globe; and this has again resulted in certain fertile regions lying side by side with deserts and other tracts more or less sterile. The regions favoured by nature have been inhabited by luxurious and effeminate races, while the more sterile countries have given birth to hardy and independent tribes; and the conflict between the North and South forms a large portion of the past history of mankind. Or again, it has been pointed out that the fertile river valleys of Egypt and Western Asia were the centres of early civilization, and that the position of the great mountain chains of Asia and Europe facilitated the spread of mankind over the earth, by enabling him to wander far away from his original abode without suffering any great change of climate. We see, also, how Europe, broken up by its coast line and mountains into separate nationalities, was, by its "varied contrasts," enabled to carry on to greater perfection a civilization which in Asia had become stationary; and how America, with its broad and fertile plains, offers a home to the surplus population of the Old Continent.

Of course, the portions of physical geography selected in the first instance should be adapted to the age of our pupils. The general distribution of land and water, the causes of winds and oceanic currents, and the agencies which influence climate, might first be taught. Volcanoes and earthquakes, the formation of glaciers and icebergs, the laws which regulate the distinction of plants and animals, and the influence which man and nature have mutually exerted upon each other, would follow in due course. In our upper classes it might be advisable to advance still further, and to impart to our pupils some knowledge of the principles of geology.

Geology.

This science is well worth studying for its own sake; but it is in relation to physical geography that I wish to