

school, I need not take up much of your time in speaking of it. Nature herself has happily provided for the maintenance of this part of education by implanting in the child an intense desire to keep constantly in motion. Its curiosity is unbounded. We, who have reached an age that has allowed us much past time to inspect the nature, qualities, and uses of most of the objects daily presented to our notice, pass with indifference thousands of things that meet us in our daily path, but the young child just beginning to notice the objects that meet him at every step, has an untried field before him; curious appliances meet him at every step; the simple opening of the lid of a box is an unsolved mystery over which he spends a long five minutes; and a new toy presents to his view, combinations of colours, newness of form, and a variety of beauties, which absorb all his attention. These keep him constantly in motion; and under proper training the physical development of the limbs proceeds with daily accessions of strength and freeness of motion.

It appears then that the training of the infant can be divided into three parts:

1st. Religious training;—2nd. Mental training, and 3rd. Physical training.

RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

In this part of a teacher's duty the first care should be to lay an early foundation for the love of God, with such illustrations of his goodness as present themselves to the child in daily life. His goodness and mercy in supplying our daily food—in clothing the beasts of the field—in sending the sun to ripen the corn, and to give us light; and the rain from heaven to water the earth—all these things should be brought forward to confirm our statements; and where opportunities admit, texts of scripture of a suitable nature should be added.

MENTAL TRAINING.

The mental training, or the developing of the mental faculties, of which perception is the earliest and most important, demand much care and study. Its object is to enable the child in its enquiry after truth to arrive at just conclusions. Another great purpose answered by this important part of the infant teacher's labour is to excite in the child a disposition to investigate every object that comes before its eyes in such a manner, that in its search after knowledge, it may be led to take a road that will lead to a successful result. This can be best carried out by lessons on objects that are calculated to arrest the attention of the infant mind.

It must not however be supposed that this has reference only to those objects which are occasionally seen arranged on the shelves of Infants' Schools; very often covered with dust, and used merely as ornaments. Almost everything of a portable nature may be brought under the notice of a class of infants. A simple leaf from a neighbouring tree may afford a subject for a gallery lesson replete with food to strengthen the expanding mind. An apple, or a pear, or a beautiful cherry with its ruddy hue, may excite the enthusiastic teacher to exert all his eloquence to win the attention of his listening flock, and to pour instruction into the ready ear. The qualities of objects, their differences of form, the surfaces of objects, the length, breadth and depth of common things, may all be invested with interest, and act the useful part.

We will suppose a teacher standing in front of a gallery of 60 infants, from the age of three to six; the little creatures fresh, from the playground, where they have satisfied their desire to exercise their physical energies, bringing the mind in its turn, ready to undergo needful training. The teacher produces a flower-pot containing a flower in bloom, or just about to expand its lovely blossoms. Who that has had the gratification of drawing out the minds of children, does not feel the power of such a teachers' position, not only to arrest the attention of those before him, not only to develop the intellectual faculties, but to strengthen those good feelings of nature upon which the moral dignity of the future man may be built with a sure and certain foundation? The taste may be refined by the beauty of the form, the colour of the leaves, and the loveliness of the flowers; the "form of beauty" which is born in man may be fostered and excited by the entire object as an ornament of nature, but the intelligent teacher, who looks upon the little ones before him as so many immortal souls who are journeying towards a better land, where there are things which the ear has not heard, and which the eye has not seen, will not fail to centre all in the great truth that every trace of ornament is owing to His creative wisdom, of whom the christian poet beautifully says "Not a flower, but shows some touch, in freckle, steak or stain, of His unrivalled pencil. He inspires their balmy odours, and imparts their hues, and bathes their eyes in nectar, and includes in grains as

countless as the seaside sands the forms with which he sprinkles all the earth."

It would give me much pleasure to enter more fully into the advantages which the infant teacher has in thus bringing his charge into contact with objects skillfully treated, so as to draw out the tender mind, but I am afraid that I shall lengthen my paper beyond its limits, and leave no room for that discussion which will elicit the remarks of many able to give their experience in this important feature of wisdom, school education. It must however be apparent that every one who has this most pliant period of infant life entrusted to his care, occupies a position of the greatest moment; and the characteristics of such a one will afford us an opportunity of consideration, from which we may derive great and enduring benefit. He must have in the first place love of children; good temper and decidedly religious feeling; ability to study the human mind, and readiness of speech, which I feel more and more every day to be a great instrument in the hands of the intelligent man whether in a private or a public position. It is only those that have had much practice in schoolkeeping, and who have had daily opportunities of noticing school teachers, that can fully appreciate the advantage of the fluent teacher over one who has not had an opportunity by practice of bringing this important talent into play. Without this fluency no instruction can be successful in that picturing out of objects, &c., which forms so essential a part of infant teaching. In order to do this well it is essential that by careful study we should ascertain how far the minds of very young children reach in their endeavours to apprehend what is brought before them. Care must also be taken to use those terms which are simple yet applicable, that the words may so far convey an idea of the object which we desire to paint that the imagination of the child may readily realize it. This can only be done by great practice, and that careful watching of the children's countenances, which if properly studied will serve as a gauge to measure how far success has been attained.

This picturing out need not be confined to objects such as are generally used in schools, but it may be used to explain words, to describe events, paint natural scenery, and anything that the mind of the child is capable of grasping. I need hardly mention that in carrying out this system of word painting, the teacher must be well up, to use a homely phrase, in all that relates to the different methods of questioning, such as the elliptical method, the suggestive method, the place of simultaneous response, besides that occasional individual questioning which puts all the school upon the alert, and secures general attention. Immediate results are not to be expected in any school, much less in one where the gentle, but sure influence of affectionate training can only be resorted to in order to produce good discipline and perfect control. We have all read of the trials of Wilderspin, when he first began to teach his untrained flock, of the clamour that assailed his ears when the parents had left the school room, of the expedient he adopted by raising his wife's cap on a pole, and swinging it around the room (thus giving his first object lesson), of his after success, when his warmest wishes were realized; and who that has read this has not felt that it was merely one instance out of many such commencements, which by perseverance and diligence have become far more favourable to young teachers, than if their endeavours at the onset had been attended with less trouble and difficulty. There are several other points of interest connected with Infant Schools, which I should be happy to bring before your notice, but these I am afraid I must leave till some future opportunity when I shall be glad of an occasion to enter again upon a subject which I feel to be one of great importance to all, and to none more than to the elementary teacher.

Education of the Hand in Penmanship.

Of that august personage, a pedagogue in a district school, under whose inspection (and spectacles) we took our first lessons in the chirographic art, we have this distinct recollection: Whenever he announced the "time to write," and we were fairly at work with pen, rule, plummet, and copy, he seldom failed to add, with a good deal of emphasis, this special direction in regard to the exercise: "Let it be short, very short." A very judicious admonition indeed, and one that will apply equally well, perhaps, to any suggestions that may be made in regard to instruction in penmanship. At any rate we shall act in accordance with our appreciation of its appropriateness, and shall make this article short.

It is now quite common, and quite proper also, as it seems to us, for children to commence writing at an early age; hence it devolves