

Having pointed out one great cause of the indifference to which teachers are subject, we have not far to look for a remedy. What we may term "fixity of tenure" is rather a novelty to English ears, and all innovation is looked upon with a certain degree of suspicion in this land, where, as the Laureate says:—

"Freedom broadens slowly down,
From precedent to precedent;"

but the idea is not only not a novelty in an adjacent part of the dominion, but is actually at work at the present time. The Scotch schoolmaster holds his appointment *ad vitam aut culpam*. He cannot be dismissed his office from the arbitrary action of a manager, or the fanciful caprice of an inspector. His proved fitness for the work, with the test of testimonials as to character, are taken as a guarantee for the conscientious performance of his duties; and the reputation that Scotland has held, as one of the best-educated countries in the world, is perhaps a favorable comment on the experimental results of the system. No doubt the opponents of this system, look upon its introduction into England as utopian, and will need the reminder that the impossible of to-day is the accomplished of to-morrow.

We only mention one result of the system which would go far to ameliorate the teacher's condition, and to strengthen his claim to a professional status—viz., stability. Those who have any extensive acquaintance with teachers will be aware of the constant stream which carries some of the *élite* of their body to the battle-fields of life. The uncertainty from year to year—nay, from quarter to quarter—is a continued embarrassment, not only to the teacher in his school work, but to any providential arrangement he may wish to make with a view to securing a provision for age. Hence, when life has lost something of its freshness, and family duties compel him to look at the stern realities of life—how often does he, when ripe in his experiences and matured in vigorous ability, embrace some other avocation, which holds out the prospect that is debarred him in his own! Given this constituent of stability, we hold that not only would the valuable services of the present members of the profession be retained, but a great inducement held out to recruits to the force, which, in the face of the requirements of the Education Act of last year, we cannot but pronounce miserably inadequate.

Concurrently with this subject of fixity of tenure, we may notice pensions as conclusive to the same end. The grant of pensions to aged teachers has this special advantage—that it is not a novelty. All innovations require a vast amount of labour and energy before they can even obtain reception in the public mind. Pensions to teachers has not only reached this stage of success, but the abstract principle receives general sanction. Sir J. K. Shuttleworth, in a recent letter to the *Times*, brings it prominently into notice, and no teacher will wish for a better champion than this tried warrior in the best interests of education. Backed by his high authority, and the example of foreign countries, our Associations and "Unions" should take the matter vigorously in hand; let them lay aside petty cases of "time-table" squabbles and other minutiae and concentrate their entire forces on the more important points of their case: "To dare and yet to oare" should be their motto. With persistent systematic action—not spasmodic efforts—to depute (if we may coin a word) their representatives, until their interests shall be so conspicuous as to command the attention of the authorities; and though they may appear exorbitant in their requirements, let them take heart of grace, and say, with good old George Herbert—

"He that aims the sky hits higher than he that aims a tree."—
Papers for the Schoolmaster.

The Teaching of Geography. (1)

By Mr. John Given, Master of the Ballymena Model School, Co. Antrim, Ireland.

In teaching Geography, I depend chiefly on three principal means:

First—The teacher must himself be the text-book to his class. He must be so well versed in all the minute details of certain countries, and have the important outlines of others, dropping as it were from his finger-ends, running over with "scraps of general information, natural history, historical allusions," &c., and withal so earnest, even to enthusiasm; not forgetting a funny story now and then; and lastly, have such a command of simple language, without any affectation of words of learned length, &c., as to be able to dispense with either text-book or note-book.

Second—When any map is unrolled while teaching, the teacher must never for a moment forget to remind the youngsters, and ask them to remind themselves, that every wavy line, or shaded mound, or coloured enclosure, or white expanse, or green level, suggests running waters having certain names, with flowers, trees, fields, houses, towns, and villages on each side; anglers, mayhap, bending over them; boats, steamers, and ships sailing on them, suggestive of commerce; green or snow-capped hills, grand ocean waves dashing against rocks, green fields, &c.

Third—The teacher must interest the scholars by telling them of any excursion he may make during vacation, and get the children also to give their experience, were it only a few miles distant, nay, a few streets or country lanes distant, letting them know that they have been making discoveries in Geography. The fact is, these two latter means might be included in the first, for, after all, if the teacher's own brain be not the well-head of all that the child really learns in Geography, or any other thing, all else is but labour lost. I can say that most emphatically. I think I hear an inquirer, perhaps an objector, say:—"Why, sir, would you not include a text-book as one of the chief means of teaching Geography?" "No, sir. I would not. I only call it a secondary one."

I give the following paper as the result of nearly thirty years' experience in teaching national schools, male and mixed, and have found this simple and natural method most successful in giving rather more than an average knowledge of Geography. The illustrations given are real answers, taken down in a note-book soon after they were uttered. Young teachers have a great advantage now-a-days compared with what the writer had when he commenced, nameily, that Geography is popular with both children and parents. In looking over one of my old note books or diaries, I find the following:—I got a severe reproof from an honest, well-to-do farmer, to-day, for learning his "weans thae (those) things up on the wa," pointing with his thumb over his shoulder to the maps. He "wasna gaun' (going) to mak' them either ministers or doctors, but guid (good) counters an' writers an' readers," and he "didna see the use o' learnin' about farrin' pearts—wad reather hae the ould ways o' learnin', any way," &c., &c. But this feeling I should think is now over. The children like to hear me tell them that it is a kind of impiety to be ignorant of Geography, that we are placed in one of the apartments of a magnificent abode—flat stupidity not to know it all. Ignorance a deplorable state—anecdote—intimate connexion of History with Geography; illustration, America (point on the map)—Pizarro—Cortez—Montezuma—what we owe to Geography—Ireland (point),—ancient state—Henry II.—Goldsmith—Burke, &c. Positive pleasure—reading about foreign countries, multitudinous isles of the Pacific (point), coral islands (specimen shown), feathery palms, civilized and Christianised, Tahiti, hum of schools among the trees, "sea-like skies and sky-

(1) This paper obtained one of Mr. Chamneys prizes for the best Essay on the best method of teaching Geography. We have already published the Essay that gained the first prize offered by Mr. Chamney, publisher of the *Irish Teachers' Journal* to which periodical we are indebted for this as well as the other.