

read a chapter of Scripture daily without offering a single explanatory remark, because my school is purely unsectarian, and because *virtually* there is a sign over the school door.—“No religious views taught here.” I would rather say, banish religion from our schools like men, or teach it like men. What I mean by imparting a christian education is, in addition to a thorough course of Scripture reading, to evolve from the child's mind practical ideas of *Repentance*, including, as it does, Conviction, Contrition, Reformation, Restitution. *Faith*, faith in general, and faith in Jesus Christ; *Pardon* or Justification &c., bringing scriptural passages to bear upon each individual definition. “But,” says the objector, “do you mean to teach *creeds*?”—creeds that are “mere skeletons, freezing abstractions, metaphysical expressions of unintelligible dogmas.” But would not our objector himself explain the morning chapter (according to the beat of his belief), and so unconsciously become a teacher of creeds? The only difference between him and me is—he gives *all* his out in a loose, fragmentary, miscellaneous, incidental, disjointed method; I try to *thread* the truths into so many definitions. Nevertheless, I do not so much encourage the use of catechisms, as adopt more precise and defined religious instruction than modern teachers seem disposed to do. I cannot but believe, that if this were more universally the custom, we should have more attentive worshippers in our assemblies.—*Papers for the School master.*

How to do it.

Teach Astronomy without a celestial globe or maps, an orrery, or a telescope; Teach Chemistry without experiments; Geography without maps; or Philosophy without apparatus? Is this the true way to do it? Ah, indeed, truly there are too many. Yes, it is *rather* unfair to slide an avalanche of hard questions down on an unsuspecting investigator, nor would it be done but for the fact that they all can be met by one answer, and that the shortest one our language knows.

Somebody, yes, anybody and everybody in order to avoid disastrous consequences, is supposed to utter very promptly the monosyllable, No, and thus to admit that each and all of the branches of science in the preceding category need illustration by aid of various apparatus thereto adapted. So much all teachers, and a respectable portion of the rest of the world have admitted for some years past. But with a singular inconsistency it has been taken for granted that the more common branches of school study do not need such aid. Picture alphabets were admissible to amuse children, but they must go without other help till they have reached a tolerable maturity and the “ologies.” A toy ladder was permitted the little climbers for the first five yards (years), and at the end of fifteen an abundance of ladders add ropes awaited them, but the intervening ten yards of precipice they must get over as best they can—a few by digging into the solid rock, most by being carried from one resting place to another by strong companions or accommodating teachers.

As a matter of fact, the mind needs the aid of illustrations most in its earlier stages of development. Is not too much to expect that a child accustomed to connect every thought with some visible object, will step at once into the world of abstract, intangible and invisible imaginings which we call ideas, and comprehend, classify, and handle these formless, airy nothings, as he would his blocks and toys? As well expect him to feast on imaginary oranges, or to fatten on a full and “well done” description of meat.

An example of our notion of the proper mode of teaching will be given in the following *Lessons on the Earth*, for most of which we are indebted to the “Teachers’ Guide to Illustration:”

The shape of the earth is the main point to be taught and the teacher asks:

1. If you put a plate on the top of a post, and place an ant on it, what will he find when he crawls to the edge? Will he fall off?
2. What would you see if you went to the edge of the earth? Would you fall off?
3. Has the earth any edge? Is it round like a plate?
4. What is the shape of the earth?

Thus far the object has been to awaken thought in the child. The next thing should be to satisfy the curiosity excited. The globe is now presented as a representation of the shape of the earth, and the place where the child is, pointed out on it. This statement of the teacher may be *believed*, but it is not understood, and it is directly contradicted by all the evidence known to the child. He states some objections which seem to him to prove the contrary, and which must be explained before his understanding accepts the new theory; and, 1st. *Why does the earth look flat, then?*

To answer this, cut a circular paper, perhaps three inches in diameter, with a half inch hole in the center. Place this on the

globe, and show him that the hole represents all that we can see of the earth at one time—i. e., our limit of vision, and that we are in the center. Ask him if that part of the globe seen through the hole does not look flat, and then explain that the earth is so very large that what we really do see of it is nothing like so large a proportion of the whole, as the half inch of globe surface is to the whole globe. Further show him that as one moves, his horizon—as represented by the edges of the hole—moves also, and that he must always be in the center, consequently he could never reach what seems to be the edge of the earth, where the sky and earth seem to meet, and that go where he would the earth would always *appear* flat.

The first objection of the little reasoner is satisfied, and by so much a disciple is gained. But suddenly a new and insurmountable one appears and he inquires, 2d. *Why do not people under the earth fall off?*

Take a magnet, and holding the end up, place a small tack upon it point downwards, which shall represent a man. Invert the magnet, and the tack does not fall off. Ask why it does not. Show that if it is removed a little distance it will fall up to the magnet, or come back again to it as we come back to the earth, if we move from it. Call the earth a great magnet, and say that it draws everything to it as the magnet does the tack. Place a knife in contact with the magnet, and let the child feel it draw the knife as he pulls it away. Then let him lift a stick of wood and tell him that the earth draws the stick to it, or else it would not be heavy.

He is now satisfied that the earth may be round and yet the people not fall off; also that its appearing flat is not inconsistent with the new (to him) theory. It is no longer an absurdity, and he is next ready for proofs, and asks, 3. *How does anybody know it is round?*

Let the north pole of the globe be directed toward any small object, as a wafer on the ceiling; then with a tack for a man, it will be shown that when the tack is at the north pole of the globe, the wafer will be directly over it, but as Mr. Tack travels towards the south pole, the wafer is less and less directly over head, and when he reaches the equator it is almost out of sight, and a little south of the equator he can not discover the wafer. Let the child put his eye where the tack is and try if he can see the wafer. Tell him there is a star which is always over the north pole, and that as people go towards the south pole, the north star seems gradually to set until they are south of the equator when it goes out of sight entirely. Open the *hemisphere* globe, and let him try on the flat surface the same experiment with the wafer. He will find it can be seen from the equator, or the south pole even, as clearly as from the north pole—proving that the earth can not be flat.

Proof 2. Tell him that when vessels on the ocean first come in sight of each other, they see the tops of the masts, and gradually the lower rigging comes in sight, and, last of all, the hull of the vessel. Let him try the experiment on the globe, with two tacks head downwards for his vessels; then try the same on the flat surface of the Hemisphere Globe.

Proof 3. Hold the globe in the sunshine, and, turning it in all ways, show that it casts a circular shadow in every position. Try a cube, cone, cylinder spheroid, book, and various shaped bodies in the same way, to show that no body but a globe will always cast a circular shadow. Then add that in eclipses of the moon the shadow of the earth is always circular.

Proof 4. State that men have sailed round the earth, and with the globe show if a person leaves any place on the globe, and travels in a straight line he will come back to the starting point, while if it were flat he would go further from it continually.

In such lessons it is seen that only a globe, a few solids, a hemisphere globe, and some tacks would be required, articles too few and simple perhaps to be called apparatus, but yet of quite as much service to the child, as the air pump, electrical machine, chemicals and cabinets of minerals are to the youth. Do not all practical teachers appreciate their utility?—(*New-York Teacher*).

What is the Type of a Perfect Recitation?

Closing my school duties to-day with an unsatisfied feeling, as though all had not been done well, I proposed to myself the above question; and hoping that you or some of your correspondents will be able to throw additional light upon the subject, I submit my reflexions—that we may know what a recitation should be, we must know its object. Within the memory of many now engaged in teaching, class recitations, as such were among the things of the future; occasionally the teacher visited the pupil at his desk, making such inquiries as was deemed necessary to satisfy, on the one hand the scholar that the teachers was doing *his* duty, and on