

teaching, then, is based upon the fact that the dispositions, or impulses of the mind are accessible in early life to training, and as the neglect of these leads invariably to grave errors, the sooner we begin this education judiciously the better. Precept, although full of importance, will not always protect the young from evil example, which operates in a contrary direction, it therefore becomes important to add something to strengthen the precept, and that we find in good moral and religious training, which forms the second prominent feature in every well conducted Infant's School. As far as intellectual training is concerned, one of the first faculties of the mind brought into play is perception, or that power of the thinking part of our being by which cognizance is taken of objects presented to the senses. By the aid of the senses we ascertain the shape, colour, size, etc., of objects, and it is the training of the judgment, in making use of these senses that constitutes one great feature of our infant system.

The third part has reference to the physical training of the child, and as this forms so obvious a portion of the daily routine of the 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. His 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 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.