

some teacher who is thoroughly practical. "Who requires any plan in pointing out places on a map?" To answer this very question is the purpose of this article; for we feel assured that if we can show the possibility of having a plan in giving a lesson in geography, which is such a thoroughly practical subject, there need be less trouble in showing that in giving any other lesson the teacher should have his matter well arranged. Let us look first at the subject as an introductory task in primary schools.

There is some difference of opinion among teachers in regard to the starting point of geography as an elementary exercise, so that the simple and the complex may retain their respective positions in the work of imparting instruction. Some say we should begin with the school, the playground and the neighbourhood; others maintain that the world as a globe or ball should be examined as a simple conception leading to a knowledge of its complex structure, and its physical and political subdivisions. A decision in favour of either plan depends upon the important question—where are children to be introduced to the study of geography? We believe that in an infant department first primary geography lessons can and ought to be given. What a field there is here for oral instruction! Lesson after lesson can be constructed by the teacher without much effort or previous preparation. The children can be so easily interested in what they see every day,—the school, the playground, the town, a river, mountain or a plain. But while we are all agreed that very young children can receive instruction of this kind, given in a series of interesting oral lessons, there are still some teachers who think that such is to a great extent superfluous. The child, when he has passed through the initiatory drill of the oral instruction already mentioned, has been sufficiently trained to take up the subject where the world is considered as a globe or ball, beginning thus with the simple and advancing by easy stages to the complex; and hence many are still very much in favour of these text-books which begin in the ordinary way of picturing the world as a unit in the solar system. It is undoubtedly the safer plan. The text-book should not be in the hands of the pupil until he can make use of it intelligently. A child who can read fluently is only then able to make use of the text-book, and by that time has received all the training necessary, by oral instruction, to make an intelligent start. Indeed the longer the text-book is kept out of the hands of the child, the better for his intellectual advancement. The early use of text-books has been the only reason why geography has been so "imperfectly and miserably taught. The hackneyed system of beginning with the book and carrying straight onward till the end is reached," is really worse than nothing.

Every intelligent teacher has his own plan in constructing an oral lesson; and it is well that it should be so. There is therefore no necessity for us to take note of any one plan in giving an oral lesson in geography. As long as the teacher remembers the leading principle—get the child interested before instructing him—he will not fail. In what may be termed systematic geography, however, the case is different; for as the text-book is supposed to be in daily use when the pupil has reached this stage, it is necessary that the teacher should adopt some plan which may not be interfered with by the arrangement of the book in use. In approaching the study of any country there should always be preliminary oral instruction, especially if the text-book has no introduction, based on interesting information, inserted at the beginning of its chapters. An elementary geography has lately been prepared for the schools in the Maritime Provinces, which is arranged on the popular plan of introductory reading lessons, preceded by inductive questions, and ending with the usual questions on the information contained in the lessons. As an experiment—"a new departure"—it seems to have met with much success;

and if the teacher can only carry out some such plan as this book suggests, by means of introductory *oral lessons* to the study of each country, there is no reason why the subject of geography may not be made even more popular than it is.

The introduction to a lesson in geography may be varied according to the desire of the teacher. A trip across the country from large town to large town, or a voyage round the coast from bay to bay, from promontory to promontory, will readily suggest itself. There is nothing so pleasant, however, to the children as a conversational sketch on the history of the country, which has for its main object the attracting of the attention of the class to some of the places mentioned on the map. In this way the map is soon recognized by the child as a bird's-eye view of the country, which ought to be spread out on the floor, but which for convenience is placed on the wall. Indeed any simple connected narrative may be adopted. For example, De Mont's explorations along the shores of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Champlain's voyages up the St. Lawrence, Franklin's travels in the North-west Territory, afford excellent lessons on the various parts of the Dominion of Canada; the American War of Independence, a lesson on the United States; Cortez in Mexico and Pizarro in Peru, lessons on Central and South America. As the teacher converses with the pupils on these subjects the places are being pointed out, until at length the complete picture of the country is imprinted on the child's mind.

But the child is not yet prepared to take up the text-book in order to pursue the study of the country described. If the results of the introductory lesson have been satisfactory, the teacher will find no difficulty in getting the attention of the class fixed upon the map next day. The idea of shape has been developed, and may be expressed in words. If the irregularities in the outline of the map are very marked, these may be noted. The child's eye thus naturally directs itself to the prominent points of land. Their relative positions may be placed on the blackboard by means of points, which may afterwards be connected by straight lines, thus making a triangle, a four-sided figure, or a polygon. The names can then be grouped into threes, and learned respectively from map and black board. Along the lines on the black board the teacher may now describe the large indentation which the pupils have pointed out on the map without mentioning their names. When the outline map is finished, the names of the bays and gulfs, arranged again in groups of three, may be learned by the pupils. This eventually will bring us in natural order to the divisions marked along the coast and painted in different colors on the map, while the divisions will bring us naturally to the towns. The map which has been drawn on the black board is of course to be reproduced by the pupils on their slates; but the teacher should not lose the opportunity, while it remains there, of giving a short lesson on distances.

Another plan of introducing the class to a particular map is as simple as the above, though in adopting it the teacher must be careful to use a map in which the physical features are well defined. One boy in the class is asked to trace with the pointer the longest range of mountains. The teacher now draws the attention of the class to the highest point in the range, giving the pupils an idea of height by comparison. No teacher should be without his units of heights and distances. This great range, considered as the back-bone of the country, will naturally lead to the secondary ranges and their heights. The direction of these ranges may be marked on the black board by thick lines, and the high peaks by means of a cross. The names having been learned as before, the great plains and valleys are pointed out, the slopes being indicated by the courses of the largest rivers. The lengths of the rivers are compared, the length of one being given. From the