

their mistakes to govern their future errors and impose light into their minds.

In our lessons for reading let us explain the words and phrases, propose questions and omit all sorts of ideas upon the subject before us and while we infuse his mind with new ideas, let us also make him feel the necessity of reading.

In teaching grammar let us not be satisfied with the teaching of state definitions and words only, let us also give ideas, communicate the knowledge of things, how to reason upon objects, how to express correct opinions and to modify false ones. Let us not only speak of substantives or adjectives, genders masculine and feminine, or of numbers singular and plural; let us imbue them with a knowledge of the things themselves, how to make a distinction of them, how to discover their nature, property and use.

In arithmetic let us not remain satisfied with inculcating interminable operations upon any given numbers; let us constantly make usual and familiar applications of the same, let us calculate, weigh, measure every thing that stands present to our sight whether in the class, the yard, or the garden; one such lesson in the open air will prove sufficient to inspire the scholars with a week's ardor both before and after it is received.

Geography is the knowledge of the earth and we invariably teach it between four walls, let us give the first notions of it at all events in presence of the objects which form the subject of our discourse: to be understood by children, but particularly to interest them, let us begin by speaking to them of the geography of the school and of the village before we entertain them with that of Persia or Thibet.

Catechism on Methods of Teaching.

TRANSLATED FROM DIESTERWEG'S "ALMANAC," (*Jahrbuch*), FOR 1855 AND 1856,

BY DR. HERMANN WIMMER.

(Continued from our last.)

VIII. GEOGRAPHY. BY ABENRODE.

12. When has the synchronistical method its right place?

Synchronism is not suitable for beginners. It requires an advanced standing, to view the contents of entire periods of the development of nations, and understandingly to pursue the gradual progress in it. To whoever is not able to survey that progress in its degrees, and, when arrived at a remarkably high point, to bring afterward the different conditions of other nations to view, interweaving them with the former picture, and thus to compose a totality of those intermixed developments, to him a synchronistical treatment of history remains sterile. Therefore, scarcely even the pupils of the first class, in our higher seminaries of learning, can be considered as sufficiently prepared for it.

13. Who has recommended the biographical method?

It may be said the entire modern school has unanimously recognized it as the best and most suitable for beginners. For this grade, nearly all modern methodic histories contain only such material as is fit for biographical instruction. In higher schools, a biographical course has been arranged in the lowest classes, and approved everywhere by the authorities.

14. Who has recommended the regressive method?

Dr. Kapp, in his general work, "Scientific school instruction as a whole," (*der wissenschaftliche Schulunterricht als ein Ganzes*), Hamm, 1834, is one of the first. Dr. Jacobi has recommended it, especially for the history of the native country, "Outlines of a new method, &c.," (*Grundzüge einer neuen methode, etc.*) Nurnberg, 1839.

15. What is the origin of the chronological method?

From time immemorial scarcely any other method has been used in Germany than this; now joining synchronism, now following the ethnographical principle. Until this hour it prevails in the majority of schools, of classical histories, and of text-books on history. It has been modified by many competent historians and teachers, for the

various purposes of elementary, burgher, and real schools, and gymnasia. Some introduce it by mythology, others by a biographical course. Some give the first place to ancient history, others to national history; others, again, attempt to suit the various wants, by a particular partition of the material, by all sorts of principles of treatment, by accommodation to the different stages of life, or by raising certain historical pictures, (*characterbilder*), above the general course of history.

16. Who has tried to introduce the grouping method?

Stiehl, (now privy-counsellor,) has proposed, in a little book, "Instruction in the history of our country in the elementary schools," (*Der vaterländische Geschichtsunterricht in unsern Elementarschulen*), Coblenz, 1842, to promote instruction in the history of the fatherland by a vivid transfer into the midst of national life, by historical facts grouped around a national calendar, with the exclusion of systematic chronology, and by presenting the coherent material well-wrought together in one mould; besides, making the whole more fruitful by communicating important patriotic documents and like best patriotic songs.

In a different way, Dr. Haupt, in the preface to his "History of the World, on Pestalozzi's principles," (*Weltgeschichte nach Pestalozzi's Grundsätzen, etc.*), Hildburghausen, 1841, recommends a grouping of the entire history after certain categories of the material, (home, society, state, nation, religion, science, and art), in each of which the suitable material of all time is comparatively placed beside each other.

17. What are the most recent tendencies concerning historical instruction?

On the one hand, it is recommended to interweave classical sentences and good historical poems, in order to vivify historical instruction by dramatizing it, and so impress better the chief epochs, especially of natural history, by story and song. On the other hand, for the sake of concentration, various combinations with geography, natural knowledge and religion, and even with the hymn book, are recommended. An endeavor has also been made, to simplify the material for common wants, by cutting off the less fertile portions, particularly of national history, and to compensate for this by entering deeper into some chief characters and events. This has fixed attention more and more on historical *characterbilder*, which are now in various works, at the teacher's command, to be used chiefly for a good Christian and national education. Particularly, it is endeavored to view more closely the civilization of nations, especially of one's own; to give more Christian and dogmatic matter; to introduce the youth rather more into the historical development of the social orders and classes than into the history of the world; and to find one's own account in the execution. For each of these tendencies, respectable voices have been heard.

18. What is to be thought of these tendencies?

It is a pedagogical mistake to do too many things at once. The teacher of history must abstain from teaching at the same time catechism and natural sciences; they do not belong to history. Further, the hymn book can not be considered as a suitable guide for instruction in national history, to say nothing of the obscure origin of many songs in it. To interweave many sayings of a celebrated man, even to make it sometimes the centre of the narration, may be quite suitable. It may be very effective to celebrate a great hero or event of history, besides elevating and improving description by a good song also. But, more important is it to simplify, and to enter deeply into the chief points, and therewith to nourish earnestly a patriotic and religious sense,—which may, no doubt, be much aided by good national *characterbilder*. A prominent regard for the orders of society is not only difficult but even not without danger. To have better care than hitherto of the progress of civilization, and to avoid subjective tendencies, particularly in modern history, will be approved by all sensible persons.

19. How far is geography to be cared for in teaching history?

Up to the present time, all attempts to combine, after a definite plan, all historical with all geographical instruction, have nearly failed. The common way in which it is done now, is either to premise to the history of the various nations and states the related geographical matter, or occasionally to insert it in fragments. In this way, of course, geography has not its degree; because for many geographical objects there are no points of reference and connection. Further, it would be necessary to explain at every time only the corresponding geography of that period, so that a comparison with the geography of the present time would be needed,—a necessity that has always great difficulties for young people. The plan by which certain geographical sections alternate with historical ones, (the former analytically, the latter chronologically,) no one would consider as a praiseworthy combination. In whatever way it is done, it is indispensable to make the geographical