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Title: The Infant System

For Developing the Intellectual and Moral Powers of all Children,

from One to Seven years of Age

Author: Samuel Wilderspin

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[Illustration]

THE INFANT SYSTEM,

FOR

DEVELOPING THE INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL POWERS OF ALL CHILDREN,

FROM ONE TO SEVEN YEARS OF AGE

BY SAMUEL WILDERSPIN, INVENTOR OF THE SYSTEM OF INFANT TRAINING.

"Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me."

\_Matt\_. xviii. 5.

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." \_Matt\_.

xvii. 10.

EIGHTH EDITION, CAREFULLY REVISED.

1852.

PREFACE

In again presenting this volume to the world, I trust I feel thankful

to God for the favour with which the Infant System has been received,

and for all the aid I have enjoyed in my course of labour. Had the

measures I originated for the development of the infant mind, and the

improvement of the moral character, been sanctioned at first, as many

now think they should have been, their progress would, undoubtedly,

have been far greater; but when I consider what has been accomplished

under the divine benediction, and amid greater difficulties than ever

beset the path of an individual similarly occupied, I know not how to

express the gratitude of which I am conscious. It seems proper and

even necessary to remark, that the system explained in this volume, is

the result of many years of labour. Thousands of children have been

attentively observed, and for the necessities that arose in their

instruction, provision has been made. Others have doubtless reached

some of the conclusions at which I have arrived, but this is only

another instance of the coincidence in judgment and effort, often

discoverable in persons far apart, whose attention has been directed

to similiar subjects; but with the exception of the elliptical plan,

devised by Dr. Gilchrist, I am not aware that I owe an idea or

contrivance to any individual whatever. Upwards of twenty-five

thousand children have been now under my own care, in various parts of

the United Kingdom, whose age has not exceeded six years; myself, my

daughters, and my agents, have organized many score of schools, and

thus I have had opportunities of studying the infant mind and heart,

such as none of my contemporaries have ever possessed.

Still I am aware I have much to learn. I am far less satisfied with

the extent of my knowledge, and far less confident of its perfection

and completeness now than I was in the earlier part of my course.

The whole energies of my mind, however, having been thrown upon the

subject, and the whole of my time for the third of a century having

been zealously devoted to it, I trust the volume will contain

knowledge of a more plain, simple, and practical character than is

elsewhere to be found:--perhaps it may not be presumption to say than

\_can\_ elsewhere be found. Should I have the pleasure to labour for

years to come, I trust I shall have much more to communicate on the

subject.

Two editions of this work in its former state have been printed in

German; and it has also been reprinted in America. I have, however,

felt it due to the friends of education, to make this volume as

complete as possible, and though still occasionally engaged in

superintending and organizing schools, I have felt it necessary to

revise this eighth edition very carefully throughout, and commence it

with a new and additional chapter.

\_Moor Cottage,

Westgate Common,

Wakefield,

Nov. 1552\_.

A FEW TESTIMONIALS TO THE INFANT SYSTEM.

It is said that we are aiming at carrying education too far; that we

are drawing it out to an extravagant length, and that, not satisfied

with dispensing education to children also have attained what in

former times was thought a proper age, we are now anxious to educate

mere infants, incapable of receiving benefit from such instruction.

This objection may be answered in two ways. In the first place, it

should be observed, that the objection comes from those very persons

who object to education being given to children when they arrive at a

more advanced period, on the ground that their parents then begin to

find them useful in labour, and consequently cannot spare so much of

their time as might be requisite: surely, that, the education of the

children should commence at that time when their labour can be of

value to their parents. But the other answer, in my opinion, is still

more decisive: it is found even at the early age of seven or eight,

that children are not void of those propensities, which are the

forerunners of vice, and I can give no better illustration of this,

than the fact of a child only eight years old, being convicted of a

capital offence at our tribunals of justice; when, therefore, I find

that at this early period of life, these habits of vice are formed, it

seems to me that we ought to begin still earlier to store their minds

with such tastes, and to instruct them in such a manner as to exclude

the admission of those practises that lead to such early crime and

depravity. A Noble friend has most justly stated, that it is not with

the experiences of yesterday that we come armed to the contest: it is

not a speculation that we are bringing forward to your notice, but an

experiment.'--\_The Lord Chancellor\_.

"In leaving poor children to the care of their parents, neglect is the

least that happens; it too frequently occurs that they are turned over

to delegates, where they meet with the worst treatment; so that we do

not in fact come so much into contact with the parents themselves as

with those delegates, who are so utterly unfit for the office they

undertake. Infant Schools, however, have completely succeeded, not

only in the negative plan they had in view, of keeping the children

out of vice and mischief, but even to the extent of engrafting

in their minds at an early age those principles of virtue, which

capacitated them for receiving a further stage of instruction at a

more advanced school, and finally, as they approached manhood, to be

ripened into the noblest sentiments of probity and integrity."--\_The

Marquis of Lansdowne\_.

"I am a zealous friend, upon conviction, to Infant Schools for the

children of the poor. No person who has not himself watched them, can

form an adequate action of what these institutions, when judiciously

conducted, may effect in forming the tempers and habits of young

children; in giving them, not so much actual knowledge, as that which

at their age is more important, the habit and faculty of acquiring it;

and it correcting those moral defects which neglect or injudicious

treatment would soon confirm and render incurable. The early age at

which children are taken out of our National Schools, is an additional

reason for commencing a regular and systematic discipline of their

minds and wills, as soon as they are capable of profiting by it; and

that is at the very earliest opening of the understanding, and at the

first manifestation of a corrupt nature in the shape of a childish

petulance and waywardness."--\_The Bishop of London\_.

"The claims of this Institution were of such a nature, that they

required no recommendation but a full statement of them. The

foundation of its happy results had been pointed out to exist in the

principles of policy, and of religion paramount to all policy--a

religion that appealed to every feeling of human nature. He would

recommend this charity, as one less attended with perplexity in its

operations or doubt as to its utility, than many, which, though

established with the best possible motives, frequently failed in

effecting the good proposed; but in this the most acute opponent could

not discover any mischief that would arise from its success."--\_Sir

James Mackintosh\_.

"I have always thought that that man that would be the greatest

benefactor to his country who did most for the suppression of crime;

this I am sorry to say, our legislature have neglected in a great

degree, while they have readily employed themselves in providing for

its punishment. Those acquainted with our prisons must know that those

found to have sunk deepest into vice and crime were persons who had

never received any education, moral or religious. In the Refuge for

the Destitute, an exact account was kept, and it was found that of the

great mass of culprits sent there by the magistrates on account of

their youth, two-thirds were the children of parents who had no

opportunity of educating them. By this institution they would at once

promote virtue and prevent vice."--\_Dr. Lushington\_.

"The real fact is, that the character of all mankind is formed very

early--much earlier than might be supposed: at the age of two or three

years, dispositions were found in children of a description the most

objectionable. In these schools the principles of mutual kindness and

assistance were carried as far as could well be conceived, and it was

most delightful to regard the conduct of the children towards each

other. Instead of opposition, they displayed mutual good-will,

inculcated to the greatest degree, so as to destroy in the minds of

the children that selfishness which was the bane of our nature. Such

effects appeared almost to realize the golden age, for the children

appeared always happy, and never so happy as when attending the

schools."--\_W. Smith, Esq. M.P\_.

"I feel, having witnessed the happy effects produced by these schools,

a warm zeal in support of such institutions. We cannot begin too soon

to impress religions principles on the minds of the young; it is an

affecting consideration, that while great statesmen have been busied

in their closets on some fine scheme or speculation, they have

neglected these salutary principles which the Almighty has given to

mankind. It is remarkable how eagerly the young mind receives the

histories of the Bible, and how well they are fitted to work on their

dispositions; and when I consider the miserable state of the poor, I

cannot but feel that the rich are in some degree, the authors of it,

in having neglected to afford them the means of education."--\_W.

Wilberforce, Esq\_.

"I am much delighted with what I have seen and heard. I confess I

entertained doubts of the practicability of the Infant School System,

but these doubts have this day been removed. If in \_one month\_ so much

can be done, what might not be expected from further training? I now

doubt no longer, and anticipate from the extension of such schools a

vast improvement in the morals and religion of the humble classes. I

conclude with moving a vote of thanks to Mr. Wilderspin."--\_Lord Chief

Justice Clerk\_.

"Sir John Sinclair, rose, and in addressing Mr. Wilderspin, said, that

he was astonished with the results of five weeks training in these

perfect infants. He had never seen a greater prodigy. He too had had

his prejudices--his doubts of the possibility of infant education;

but these doubts had now vanished, and for ever. The arrangements

for bodily exercise, connected with mental and moral improvement,

especially delighted him. He was amused as well as instructed by the

well-applied admixture of diverting expedients to keep the children

alive and alert. It was 'seria mixta jocis,' but there was practical

sense in the seemingly most frivolous part of the plan. He trusted

that the time was not far distant when there should be many such

institutions. He called on all present to join him in returning

cordial thanks to Mr. Wilderspin."--\_Scotsman\_.

"The grand secret of the improvement found to be derived from these

establishments, is their constant tendency to remove evil example and

misery from the little creatures during almost the whole of their

waking hours. Consider how a child belonging to one of these passes

his day. As soon as he is up, the indispensable condition, and the

only one of his admission to the school, that of clean face and hands,

is enforced, and the mother, in order to be relieved of the care of

him during the, day, is obliged to have him washed. He then leaves the

abode of filth and intemperance, and squalid poverty, and ill-temper,

for a clean, airy place, pleasant in summer, warm and dry in winter;

and where he sees not a face that is not lighted up with the smile of

kindness towards him. His whole day is passed in amusing exercises, or

interesting instruction; and he returns at evening-tide fatigued and

ready for his bed, so that the scenes passing at his comfortless home

make a slight impression on his mind or on his spirits."--\_Edinburgh

Review\_.

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THE INFANT SYSTEM.

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CHAPTER I.

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and perversion of the principles of infant education--Signs of

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\* \* \* \* \*

Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,

We love the play-place of our early days;

The scene is touching."--\_Cowper\_

"What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under

the sun?"--\_Ecclesiastes i. 3\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

How came you to think of the Infant School system of teaching?--is

a question that I have often been asked; and my friends think it

advisable that it should, in part at least, be answered. I proceed

therefore, in compliance with their wishes, to give some little of

the required information in this place, as perhaps it may throw light

upon, or explain more clearly, the fundamental principles laid down

and advocated throughout this volume. In few words, then, I would

reply,--\_circumstances\_ forced me to it. Born an only child, under

peculiar circumstances, and living in an isolated neighbourhood, I had

no childish companions from infancy; I was, consequently, thrown much

on my own resources, and early became a \_thinker\_, and in some measure

a contriver too. I beheld a beautiful world around me, full of

everything to admire and to win attention. As soon as I could think at

all, I saw that there must be a Maker, Governor, and Protector of this

world. Such things as had life won my admiration, and thus I became

very fond of animals. Flowers and fruits, stones and minerals, I also

soon learned to observe and to mark their differences. This led to

enquiries as to how they came--where from--who made them? My mother

told me they came from God, that he made them and all things that I

saw; and also that he made herself and me. From that moment I never

doubted His wonderful existence. I could not, nor did I have, at that

age, any correct idea of God; but I soon learned to have elevated

notions of His works, and through them I was led to adore something

invisible--something I was convinced of within, but could not see. My

mother, to my knowledge, never deceived me, or told me an untruth:

therefore, I believed her implicitly; and to this day I never doubted.

So much for the implanting an early \_faith\_ in the Unseen. But the

beautiful world and the things in it which I saw, and with which I

came in contact, Oh! how wonderful they appeared to me! They were my

companions! Other children were strange to me, and they were not nigh

either to help or to thwart me.

My mother was my oracle during the first six years of childhood,

resolving my difficulties and answering my questions. I was

happy--very happy! and still look back to those days with

indescribable pleasure and satisfaction. I had no tasks. I was not

pestered with \_A.B. C\_., nor \_ab. eb. ib\_. From \_things\_ my parents

chiefly taught me my first lessons, and they have been as durable as

life. For days and weeks did I study such lessons. My parents waited

till I asked for information, and when it was required it was never

denied. The world and the wonders in it formed as it were a heaven to

me. I am told I gave but little trouble at this age. In the beautiful

fields and wild coppices about Hornsey, as yet unencroached upon by

suburban extension; and by the side of the then solitary banks of the

New River, I was always to be found. In cold and wet weather I had

a stock of similar lessons in my home. Small live animals were my

constant companions; they taught me that love begets love. I did love

and delight in them, and when they died I mourned their loss. Every

day brought me new information, which my parents perfected. At length

the alphabet was mastered, and afterwards spelling, reading, and

so forth. My mind \_being thus previously filled with ideas\_, the

acquirement of words and abstract terms became less irksome, and I

cannot remember that thus far it cost me any trouble, much less pain.

Information of every kind fit for childhood then really gave me

pleasure. No doubt I am greatly indebted to my parents for their

judicious management. My father always in the evening, took great

pains to explain things to me; he nurtured but never crammed; he knew

when to teach and when to let alone. Unfortunately, through very

peculiar circumstances, I was removed from the immediate care and

superintendence of both parents rather early in life; and, at an age

the most dangerous, was left to grapple nearly alone with the wide

world and the beings in it, with little of either parental guidance.

It was then I saw the immense importance and advantage of early

impressions. To me they were of incalculable benefit, and no doubt

led, when I became a man, to the thoughts which ended in the

development and practical working of the Infant System and method of

education.

Schools for infants then existed, but what were they? Simply

dame-schools, with the hornbook for boys and girls, and perhaps a

little sewing for the latter. Their sign was--"Children taught to read

and work here," and their furniture the cap and bells, the rod in

pickle, and a corner for dunces. The finishing stroke was seen in the

parlour of the inn, or the farm-house, in the shape of needlework as a

samplar;--"Lydia Languish, her work, done at ---- school, in the year

of our Lord, 1809." Such were the schools in country places then in

existence, the little ones doing nothing. In after-life, I thought

a remedy was required and might be found, and therefore set about

working it out. How it was done shall be hereafter explained.

I knew my own infant state had been a happy one, and I wondered to see

children crying to go to school, when learning had been such a delight

to me. But I soon ceased to wonder when I was sent there myself. At my

first school I can truly say I learnt nothing, except it be that I had

especially the sense of feeling. I often had raps with the cane on the

head, across the shoulders, and on the hand, and I found it was mainly

for not learning what the teacher had \_forgotten to teach me\_. The

terms used were "master" and "mistress," and they were tolerably

appropriate as far as I was concerned, for to me both became objects

of terror, so much so, that for the first time in my life, I really

fretted when the hour of teaching came. My parents were not long in

perceiving this although I did not complain. They told me it was for

my good that I should go to school, and I thoroughly believed them.

Yet I could not understand why it should be associated with so much

dislike and pain on my part, when my first school,--the beautiful

world of nature, had been so lovely, and my first teachers had always

increased the delight by removing my difficulties, and this so much

so that I now longed for evening to come to have fresh light and

instruction given. My father now decided that I should not go to

school, and he became my teacher as before, the world being my great

book. I was delighted with Robinson Crusoe, and this work became my

companion, and to which was added the Pilgrim's Progress. After these,

my great favourite was Buffon's Natural History. I used to go alone,

taking a volume at a time, to read amidst the pleasant country around,

but most frequently in the quiet nooks and retreats of Hornsey Wood.

It seems, however, that I was always watched and superintended by my

mother during these readings and rural rambles, for whenever danger

was near she generally appeared, but seldom otherwise, so that I had

perfect freedom in these matters. I have every reason to believe that

the first seven years of my life laid the basis of all I know that is

worth knowing, and led to the formation of my character and future

career in life. Of my schooling afterwards it is unnecessary to say

much, as it was the usual routine such as others had, but it never

satisfied me, and I even then saw errors throughout the whole, and

this strengthened my first impressions, and tended to mature the

after-thought in me, that something wanted doing and \_must be done\_.

It is not my intention in this introductory chapter to write an

auto-biography; but my object is simply to show, how one impression

followed another in my case, and what led to it; to point out briefly

the various plans and inventions I had recourse to in carrying out my

views and intentions; and, finally, to allude to their propagation

through the country personally by myself, on purpose to show, in

conclusion, that although infant education has been extensively

adopted, and many of its principles, being based on nature, have been

applied with great success to older children, yet especially in the

case of infants, that strict adherence to nature and simplicity which

is so fundamental and so requisite, has been often overlooked, and in

some cases totally discarded.

It will, I trust, appear from what has been already said, that even

from early childhood I both saw and felt that there was a period in

human life, and that the most important period, as experience has

proved to my full satisfaction, not legislated for, that is, not duly

provided with suitable and appropriate methods of education. To see

this was one thing, to provide a remedy for it and to \_invent plans\_

for carrying out that remedy, was another. The systems of Bell and of

Lancaster were then commencing operations, but were quite unsuitable

for children under seven years of age at least, and therefore took

little or no cognizance of that early period, which I had been

inwardly convinced was of such eminent importance. I was destined for

business, and served the usual apprenticeship to become qualified for

it, and also continued in it for a short period on my own account.

Even at this time the thought ever haunted me as to what should be

done for young children. At length the germ was developed at one of

the Sunday Schools, which were then rising into general notice. For

years I attended one of these in London, and here circumstances again

befriended me, regarding the matter so frequently in my thoughts. The

teachers mostly preferred having a class to superintend that knew

something, and I being then a junior, it fell to my lot to have a

class that knew little or nothing. I mean nothing that it was the

object of the Sunday-school to teach. It soon appeared clear to me,

that such a class required different treatment to those more advanced,

and especially the \_young\_ children. Nobody wanted this class, it was

always "to let," if I did not take it. The result was, I always had

it. Others looked to the post of honour, the Bible-class. I soon found

that to talk to such children as I had to teach, in the manner the

others did to the older and more advanced children, was useless, and

thus I was forced to simplify my mode of teaching to suit their state

of apprehension, and now and then even to amuse them. This succeeded

so well, that in the end my class became the popular class, and I

became still further convinced of the desirableness of an \_especial

plan for teaching the very young\_. I, however, still thought that the

alphabet should be taught first, with the usual things in their order.

At length, shortly after my marriage, which was rather early in life,

an opportunity presented itself for trying an experiment on a larger

scale; from having explained my views on early education to a friend,

I was solicited to take the superintendence of an asylum for young

children, about to be formed in a populous part of London. Having thus

an opportunity of carrying out my wishes, thoughts, and feelings, in

a way that I could not have anticipated, I gave up my connexion with

business, and devoted myself to the object. Great and unforseen

difficulties however had to be encountered. The first week was

dreadful. I began with too many children, and we had six whom the

mothers afterwards confessed they sent to \_wean\_. These not only cried

themselves, but set all the others crying also, and we regretted

having begun the experiment. At length, driven almost to despair, it

became evident that something new must be done to still the tumult. As

an expedient, I elevated a cap on a pole, which immediately attracted

their attention and occasioned silence. Thus I obtained a clue to

guide me, and my mind instantly perceived one of the most fundamental

principles in infant teaching, in fact of most teaching, and which

long experience has proved true, and that is, to appeal to the SENSES

of the children. After this, every day developed something new to me,

the children became happy beyond my expectations, and my course

onward was gradually progressive. Children and teachers became happy

together; difficulties vanished as we proceeded, and at length my wife

and I made up our minds to devote our whole lives to the perfecting of

our plans, and the carrying them out extensively. The novelty of the

thing drew numbers of visitors to a district, where the carriages of

the nobility and gentry had not been seen before; but the labour to us

was so greatly increased by this, that my wife sunk under it, and I

was left with four young children, to prosecute my plans alone in the

world.

From the day I caught the idea, that a great secret in teaching the

young was to teach through the \_senses\_, the various implements now in

such general use in infant schools, were step by step invented by me.

Objects of all kinds were introduced, and oral lessons given upon

them, to teach their qualities and properties, and amongst the various

visitors most frequently present at such times, was the gentleman who

has acquired fame by publishing "Lessons on Objects," which little

work has elsewhere been highly commended by me, albeit it came forth

into the world several years after the period I now speak of. To give

such lessons I found it requisite to have the children altogether, so

as better to attract their attention simultaneously. This was first

attempted by placing them at one end of the room, but it was found

inconvenient; then parallel lines were chalked across the floor, and

they sat down in order on these; but though attention was gained, the

posture was unsuitable. Cords were then stretched across to keep them

in proper rank, and various experiments tried with seats, until they

ended in the construction of a permanently fixed gallery of regularly

ascending seats. This implement or structure has now come into almost

universal use in infant schools, and, in fact, they are considered

incomplete without one; and also they are in much request in schools

for children of every age. To give an idea of number through the eye,

I had recourse at first to buttons strung on strings across a frame,

and this led to the substitution of wooden balls on wires, and other

improvements through experience, until the arithmeticon, hereafter

described, was fully formed. It having been found a useful instrument,

the credit of contriving it has been impugned, by liking it to the

Roman Abacus and Chinese Swanpan; but were those instruments like in

structure, or designed especially to teach the multiplication table?

if not, they are no more similar than "a hawk to a hand-saw." The

former I have never seen, and the first time I saw one of the Chinese

instruments was some five or six years ago in the Museum at Hull. The

clapping of hands, the moving of arms, marching in order, and

various other motions, all of which are now become the especial

characteristics of an infant-school, were gradually introduced as

circumstances or nature dictated, partly to obtain simultaneous action

and obedience, and partly to provide that physical exercise which

beings so young perpetually require, and which they are constantly

taking when left free and unrestrained. It is not requisite to make

mention here of the swing--the play grounds--the flower borders--and

various other matters which are fully treated of in the following

portions of this work, further than to add, that they are now

generally adopted in schools, and especially in some of the principal

training establishments in the British Empire. As these plans and

instruments are used by a certain religious infant-school society,

which professes to have imported its system from Switzerland,

where such things never had their origin, I feel it necessary most

emphatically to repeat, that they are entirely of my own invention.

After the severe bereavement mentioned above, I still persevered in

my favourite study, and learned more from my own children than I did

before, having to act in the double capacity of father and mother. I

am well aware of the loss my children sustained by the above calamity.

In the matter of training, nothing can replace a good mother,--and

such indeed she eminently was! I felt the heavy stroke more severely,

and my children did also; but I consoled myself with the reflection,

that my loss was her gain, and that she had lived to witness fruits of

her unparalleled labours, to the thorough abandonment of self, and the

glory of her Maker. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these

little ones, ye have done it unto me." Night and day, when I had time

to think, such promises as these cheered and sustained me in doing

what I could for my own motherless children, and more and more

cemented my affections on the children of others, and, finally,

enabled me to mature my plans, and gave me strength and courage to

carry them out, first in the villages and places near London, and,

ultimately, single-handed and alone, through more than a quarter of

a century, in many of the chief cities, towns, and villages of the

United Kingdom. Simply to state this fact is all that is requisite

here to answer my present purpose, and to enlarge more upon it is

needless, as a full detail of the whole career is given in my "Early

Discipline Illustrated; or, the Infant System Progressing and

Successful," third edition, published in 1840, and to which much

more would require adding to bring it down to the present time, if a

further edition should be called for.

That prejudice should assail me, and objections be started as I came

more out into the world, was to be expected. I knew my own intentions,

but the world did not, and I came in for a full share of obloquy and

persecution. This did me much good, and was a preparatory discipline,

to make me careless of the opinion of mankind in the matter, so long

as I felt that I was in the right, and had the approval of my own

conscience. The more I was opposed, the more were my energies lighted

up and strengthened; opposition always sharpened my faculties, instead

of overcoming and depressing me. The whole gradually prospered from

the first, under every disadvantage and notwithstanding the strenuous

efforts of the short-sighted and bigoted. These things laid my first

patrons prostrate, and the Society of great names which followed, was

soon dissolved. Every effort was made by the enemies of true training

and education, to crush the thing in the bud, and not only the thing,

but also the man who developed it and worked it out. Thank God, these

inimical aims did not succeed. Though worldly patrons failed, I had

one Patron who never deserted me, but Who upheld and encouraged me

from first to last, until the end was gained. Not, however, all that

was aimed at, but much of it, and the rest will follow or I am greatly

mistaken. I have in various places seen things that I earnestly

contended for, but which were rejected at the time, at length

established and their value seen. Look at the schools in existence

now, bad as some of them are, and compare them with those which

existed a third of a century ago, and it will be found that they have

progressed, and it may safely be anticipated that they will still

further progress, for there is much need of it. The system pourtrayed

in this book is intended to act on all the faculties of a child,

especially the highest, and to strengthen them at the time the mere

animal part of his nature is weak. The existing schools were not found

fit to take our children when they left us. The dull, monotonous,

sleepy, heavy system pursued, was quite unadapted to advance such

pupils. At this point of the history much damage was done to our

plans. The essence or kernel was omitted and the mere shell retained,

to make infant schools harmonise with the existing ones, instead of

the contrary. There were and are however two great exceptions to

this rule. The Model Schools at Dublin under the Government Board of

Education, and the Glasgow Training Schools for Scotland. At Dublin

all is progression. The infant department is the best in Europe,--I

believe the best in the world. The other departments are equally good

in most things, and are well managed, as far as regards a good secular

education being given, and better I think than any similar institution

in England. At Glasgow the same master whom I taught still exists. I

have not seen the schools for many years, but I hear from those who

have been trained there, that nothing can work better. The Glasgow

Committee, with Mr. Stow at their head, deserve the thanks of the

whole community for having applied the principles on which the Infant

School System is based, to juveniles, and carried out and proved the

practicability of it for the public good. I told them this in lectures

at Glasgow long ago, and exhibited before them children to prove the

truths I promulgated, both there and in other parts of Scotland,

to convince a doubting and cautious public that my views were

practicable. I may add, in passing, that I found the Scotch took

nothing on trust. They would listen to my lectures, but it always

ended in my being obliged to prove it with children. To David Stow

much credit is due, for having written useful books and performed

useful works. I am not the man to deprive him of this his just due,

but I have such faith in the honour of his countrymen in general, that

I believe the time is not far distant when some one of them will give

to me that credit which is fairly and justly due to me with respect to

the educational movements in Scotland. No class of men are better able

to appreciate and understand the principles on which a system of true

education should be based than Scotchmen, and hence, though cautious

in taking up new things, or new views of things, they can do justice

to, and appreciate, that which is worthy of their attention.

At the time I have been speaking of there were no lessons published

suitable for us. I searched the print shops in the metropolis, and

with the aid of drawings from friends, supplied this deficiency. Next

I had suitable lessons printed to accompany them, and also spelling

lessons of such words as could be \_acted\_ and \_explained\_. Then

followed suitable reading lessons, prints of objects, and the simple

forms of geometry. When a demand was created for all these, the

publishing trade took them up, and thus the numerous excellent plates

and lessons now published for the purposes of teaching, had their

first origin.

I ant thoroughly convinced that the first seven years of a child's

life is the \_golden period\_, and if I can induce mankind generally to

think with me, and to act on the principles humbly laid open in the

succeeding chapters of this book, I may feel some consolation that I

have not lived in vain. Sure I am that if the world will only give

man a fair chance, and train him from the beginning with care, with

prudence, with caution, with circumspection, with freedom, and above

all with \_love\_, he will bear such fruit, under the blessing of God,

as will make even this world as a paradise. From childhood up to age

has this truth been perfecting and strengthening in me, and I have no

more doubt that it is a truth, than I have of my own existence. Who

can look upon a child without admiring it, without loving it? With

my feelings it is impossible! When I compare the Revealed Will of

God,--the Scriptures, with His other Great Book, the book of nature,

which I read so early in life, and read with delight to this present

hour, I see the one illustrates the other. I see that the \_best\_

ground produces the \_rankest weeds\_--but not if cultivated. What does

not care do for all things in nature, why not then for man? Let him

run wild through neglect, and undoubtedly he produces weeds; but this,

to my mind, is an argument in his favour, and shews the ground is

capable of producing rich fruits. When we study the true nature of his

mind, with the same assiduity as we now do study the nature of his

body, then will mankind see it in this light, begin at the right

end, and cultivate from the first the beautiful faculties of his

own species. I say beautiful! and are not the budding faculties of

childhood both beautiful and lovely? "Feed my lambs," saith the Lord

Jesus. But, reader, are they all duly fed in this rich, wealthy,

and christian country? How many, on the contrary, are fed with evil

influences, street associations, and are thus poisoned at every pore,

until their being is thoroughly contaminated through neglect, public

and private, and, when not orphans, even parental neglect also; and

then after having increased our county rates, enlarged our prisons,

and built union workhouses (with respect to morals and training for

the young, I say pest-houses) we add ragged schools. We allow them to

become contaminated, and when that is accomplished, we go to work to

undo what has been done. If this does not succeed we punish by law the

poor neglected beings for taking the poisons we really offered them!

Oh, rare consistency in this boasted age of light, and science, and

learning! Let us, therefore, first seek an education worthy of the

name, and then find the best means of carrying it out. What exists at

present is fundamentally defective, especially by beginning too late,

and as regards the plans and principles laid down for infants in many

cases, much has been merely travestied, and many of the most essential

parts entirely set aside or overlooked.

The amount of solid information that may be given to an infant by a

wise and judicious mother, during the first two years only, would

appear to many persons astonishing. I have as clear a recollection of

what my mother taught me at two years old, as I have of that which she

taught me at the age of six. The facts crowd upon me so fast that

I scarcely know where to stop. Those lessons were the germs of the

inventions and babyisms--the hand-clapping, arm-twisting, and the

like--with which the infants are so delighted in their schools, and

which, at the time they were developed, about a third of a century

since, were scouted, and the inventor looked upon as a good natured

simpleton, or a well-meaning fool. I have a rather vivid recollection

of this fact, but in the end, as we proceeded, many who came to sneer,

went away with very different feelings. The plans were for infants,

for infants they answered well, but I wish I could say that no

excresences had grown upon them.

Now the ends to be answered in Infant Education, as intended by me,

are as follows. First, to feed the child's faculties with suitable

food; Second,--to simplify and explain everything, so as to adapt it

properly to those faculties; Third, not to overdo anything, either by

giving too much instruction, or instruction beyond their years, and

thus over-excite the brain, and injure the faculties; and, Fourth,

ever to blend both exercise and amusement with instruction at due

intervals, which is readily effected by a moderate amount of singing,

alternating with the usual motions and evolutions in the schoolroom,

and the unfettered freedom of the play-ground. If these rules be

attended to, the following results are certain,--a higher state of

physical, mental, and moral health. Physical health is essential to

mental vigour if it is to come to manhood. If the physical, mental,

moral, and spiritual constitution be properly acted upon, fed, and

trained, it adds to the happiness of the child; but if this is

not done, it becomes miserable, and as a consequence restless,

troublesome, and mischievous. Such facts were made very evident to me

by the infants under my care in the earlier part of my career, and

also have been fully confirmed throughout it, and they have forced

me as it were to that more lively, interesting, and amusing mode of

instruction, which I have through life endeavoured to propagate.

I found children to be highly delighted with pictures and

object-lessons; hence their value and high importance is so strongly

insisted on in all my books, and the best methods of using them

distinctly laid down. The trouble of rightly using such lessons has

caused them to be almost entirely laid aside in very many existing

infant schools, and in too many instances the mere learning and

repeating of sounds by rote, or what may very properly be called the

"parrot system," has been introduced in their place. But I yet hope

that the good sense of the public will in the end remedy such defects.

In such cases the memory is the only faculty exercised, and that at

the expense of those that are higher. Where this is persisted in, the

infant system is rendered nugatory, and my labours are in vain. It

therefore cannot be too strongly insisted on, and too frequently

repeated, that one of its most fundamental principles, as regards the

unfolding, properly and easily, of the intellectual faculties, is to

communicate \_notions\_ and \_ideas\_ rather than words and sounds, or at

least to let them be done together.

As before stated, the gallery had its origin in my desire to teach the

children simultaneously. It enables a teacher more readily to secure

their full attention in all oral lessons, and establishes a sympathy

between them. More real facts may be taught children simultaneously by

the master, than can be taught by all the monitors in a school. The

little infants should always sit at the bottom, and by no means be

confined to another room. They can see and hear all that is going on,

and understand it far more than you would suppose, though they cannot

yet tell all they learn and know; but when the power of speech comes,

they will surprise you with what they have learned. It is therefore a

great error to separate children and cut them off from the advantage

of all object-lessons, and gallery-teaching, because they are the

youngest. They learn more through sympathy and communion with their

five or six year elders, than the most clever adult can teach them. An

infant-school, is, in many respects, a community in a state of nature.

What one does, the other almost involuntarily learns. The merest

infants are not an exception to this rule, and therefore the

separation in many infant-schools of the children, invariably into

two classes, sometimes in two rooms, is a great mistake, and can only

arise from ignorance of the laws under which the young mind

unfolds itself, and a misunderstanding of the first principles of

infant-teaching.

Perhaps one reason that infant-school teaching has not been kept up to

its proper point and true standing, is, the desire to make a striking

shew before the visitors in a school. I fear the grounds for this

opinion are not slight. Perhaps nothing has lead more to the

multiplication of singing, even to the injury of the children. The

ease with which they learn a metrical piece by \_rote\_, and the

readiness with which they acquire a tune to it, is surprising, and as

the exhibition of such attainments forms a striking sinew, in many

cases little else is taught them. But to a sensible and thinking mind,

one single piece \_understood\_, that is, one where clear ideas are

annexed to the words in the minds of the children, is worth a hundred

where this is not the case. Intellectual improvement, and moral

training, are not thus easily exhibited, especially, the latter; but

on dilligent attention to these, the real and permanent utility of the

schools depends.

Many things have been taught most unsuitable for young children, and

that simplicity which is so absolutely requisite, both as regards

matter and language, seriously departed from. Let but the great

principle of teaching through the senses be borne distinctly in mind,

and of giving ideas in preference to sounds, and it will have a strong

tendency to put an end to the evil complained of. How much may

be taught by the simplest object, such as a stone?

Form--weight--hardness, colour, sound, and numerous other qualities

and properties, all of which must be clearly understood, because they

are demonstrated by the sight and other senses. Once give to the mind

a store of clear ideas in regular and natural order, and a series of

words that are distinct and definite in meaning, and you have laid a

firm foundation whereon to exercise the higher faculties of reflection

and reasoning. Still more is it of paramount importance to educate and

bring out the moral faculties, to cultivate the sense of right and

wrong, to enlighten and strengthen the young conscience, to teach the

love of good, and the hatred of evil, and to strive to bring the whole

being under the new commandment of Christ, "that ye love one another."

The golden rule, "to do unto others as ye would that they should do

unto you," is one of the most powerful precepts that can be applied to

awaken just moral feelings; and innumerable instances must occur,

in the varied events which happen in a school, to bring it home

powerfully to the heart, and illustrate it appropriately.

Perhaps in nothing has that simplicity of teaching so requisite for

the young, and so earnestly contended for by me throughout, been

so much disregarded, neglected, and preverted as in the matter of

religion. I taught from the first, by means of pictures properly

selected, scriptural truths and facts, histories and parables; and

also suitable texts, and simple hymns and prayers were added. This

surely was enough for \_infants\_. I thought so then, and I think so

still, for an overdoing always ends in an undoing, and the mind of a

child should never be crammed with that which it cannot understand, to

the neglect of that which it may. I have opened schools for many sects

and parties, and have been sorry to find them so prone to bind the

"grevious burdens" of their own peculiar dogmas on the feeble minds of

little children, to the neglect of the "weightier matters of the law,

justice, mercy, and the love of God." I hope a time will come when the

distinct precepts of Christ, in this respect, will be more faithfully

regarded. The religion for infants should be a simple trust in "the

love and kindness of God our Saviour," a desire of grace and strength

from Him, and an aim to live thereby in love and duty to their parents

and teachers, and in kindness and affection with their brothers,

sisters, and schoolfellows. Such things as these, their young

minds may apprehend, feel, and apply, and thus be strengthened and

benefitted, but scholastic subtelties, and controverted dogmas, such

as the grey-headed are perpetually disputing about, surely should

never be taught to infants by any one who has carefully considered the

subject, and properly studied the nature of the infant mind.

In all probability advancing years will prevent me in future from

personally labouring much in the cause, and from personally overcoming

objections, by presenting publicly, facts that cannot be refuted. It

is out of my power now to employ agents and pay them. I cannot

take infants by sea and land to convince unbelievers, and silence

gainsayers. Neither circumstances nor remaining strength, will allow

me to repeat these things. I must trust then to my pen, to the

thinkers amongst us, and above all to the good Providence of God, for

further success in behalf of the rising generation. Those who doubt

what I assert about children should recollect one fact--twenty-seven

thousand have passed through my hands, and were for a short time under

my training, and have then been examined by me to convince a doubting

public, on the spot where they happened to be in each town and

country, all this for the period of one-third of a century. Ought not

this to entitle me, as respects the education of children, to say such

a thing is right, or even such a thing is wrong? The abuse of a plan

is no argument against its use. That it has been abused I am well

aware,--that the \_parrot-system\_ has been revived and also applied in

infant-schools. It was never intended to injure the young brain by

over-exciting it, or to fill the memory with useless rubbish; yet this

is done. I cannot help it. I have done and will do my best to prevent

such a violation of the very first principles of infant teaching. To

conclude, there is much to be thankful for! Since the infant-system

was evolved, a very great improvement has taken place in the character

of school-books, and also in prints. The graphic illustrations and the

simplicity of style, on a variety of subjects, is admirable. The same

may be said with respect to nursery books; I see a great improvement

in all these. This is comforting to one situated as I am, and leads me

to hope much from the future. I trust the intellectual character of

the age will advance, and not only the intellectual but also the moral

and spiritual, and "that truth and justice, religion and piety may be

established amongst us for all generations."

CHAPTER II.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY.

\_Teachers of theft--Children the dupes of the profligate--An effort

at detection--Affecting cases of early depravity--Progress of a young

delinquent--Children employed in theft by their parents--Ingenuity of

juvenile thieves--Results of an early tuition in crime--The juvenile

thief incorrigible--Facility of disposing of stolen property--A

hardened child--Parents robbed by their children--A youthful

suicide--A youthful murderer\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"An uneducated, unemployed poor, not only must be liable to fall into

a variety of temptations, but they will, at times, unavoidably prove

restless, dissatisfied, perverse, and seditious: nor is this all, even

their most useful and valuable qualities, for want of regular and

good habits, and a proper bias and direction from early religious

instruction, frequently became dangerous and hurtful to society;

their patience degenerates into sullenness, their perseverance into

obstinacy, their strength and courage into brutal ferocity."--\_The

Bishop of Norwich\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

It has long been a subject of regret as well as of astonishment to

the reflecting and benevolent, that notwithstanding the numerous

institutions which exist in this country for the education and

improvement of the poor, and in defiance of the endeavours of our

magistracy and police establishment, crime should rather increase than

diminish. Many persons have been induced to conclude from this fact

that our Sunday, parochial, and national schools, as well as our Bible

Societies, and institutions of a similar nature, are of little or no

use. Absurd as the inference is, I have known more than one or two

persons draw it; not considering, that although these means may be

insufficient to counteract the cause of crime, or to prevent all

its evil effects, yet, nevertheless, they must certainly check

its progress;--that if there be many offenders, despite of these

institutions, there would, doubtless, be many more were they not in

existence; and hence to revile or neglect them is unworthy of good

sense or good feeling.

It is not my purpose in the present chapter to dwell on the commission

of crime generally, but on juvenile delinquency in particular; and

on this only so far as regards the case of young children. I will,

therefore, make public a collection of facts, some of which were

obtained at considerable personal hazard and inconvenience, which will

place it in a clear yet painful light.

It is said, that in the year 1819, the number of boys, in London

alone, who procured a considerable part of their subsistence by

pocket-picking and thieving in every possible form, was estimated at

from eleven to fifteen hundred. One man who lived in Wentworth-Street,

near Spitalfields, had forty boys in training to steal and pick

pockets, who were paid for their exertions with a part of the plunder;

fortunately, however, for the public, this notable tutor of thieves

was himself convicted of theft, and transported. This system of

tutorage is by no means uncommon, nor is it confined to the male sex.

I remember reading some time back, in the police reports, of a woman

who had entrapped \_eight or ten children\_ from their parents, had

trained them up, and sent them out thieving; nor was it until one of

these infantile depredators was taken in the act of stealing, that

this was made known, and the children restored to their homes. Here we

see eight or ten children, probably from the neglect of their parents,

enticed away, no doubt by the promise of a few cakes, or of some other

trifling reward, and in imminent danger of becoming confirmed thieves,

from which they were rescued by this providential discovery of their

situation; and we know not how many children may have been led to evil

practices in like manner.

I will give another instance which occurred at the office at Queen

Square.--A female, apparently no more than nineteen years of age,

named Jane Smith, and a child just turned of five years old, named

Mary Ann Ranniford, were put to the bar, before Edward Markland,

Esq., the magistrate, charged with circulating counterfeit coin in

Westminster and the county of Surrey, to a vast extent.

It appeared that the elder prisoner had long been known to be a common

utterer of base coin, in which she dealt very largely with those

individuals who are agents in London to the manufacturers of the

spurious commodity in Birmingham. She had been once or twice before

charged with the offence, and therefore she became so notorious that

she was necessitated to leave off putting the bad money away herself;

but so determined was she to keep up the traffic, that she was in the

habit of employing children of tender years to pass the counterfeit

money. On one occasion two Bow Street officers observed her at her old

trade, in company with the child Ranniford. The officers kept a strict

eye upon her movements, and saw her several times pass something to

the little girl; and she, by the direction of her instructor, went

into different shops (such as hosiers, where she purchased balls of

worsted, pastry-cooks, tobacconists, and fruiterers), where she passed

the bad money, and received in return goods and change. On the other

side of the bridge, the patroles saw the prisoner Smith deliver

something to the child, and point out the shop of Mr. Isaacs, a

fruiterer, in Bridge Street, Westminster. The child went in, and asked

for a juicy lemon, and gave a counterfeit shilling in payment. Mrs.

Isaacs had no suspicion from the tender age of the utterer, and its

respectable appearance, that the money was bad, and was about to give

change, when one of the officers entered, and took the deluded child

into custody, whilst his companion secured the elder prisoner (Smith),

and on searching her pockets he found twelve bad shillings, some

parcels of snuff, several balls of cotton and worsted, and other

trifling articles, which the child had purchased in the course of the

day. The officers who had secured them, learned from the child that

her parents lived in Cross Street, East Lane, Walworth, and that Smith

had taken her out for a walk. The patrol instantly communicated the

circumstance to the child's parents, who were hard-working honest

people, and their feelings on hearing that their infant had been

seduced into the commission of such a crime, can be more easily

conceived than described. They stated that the woman Smith had

formerly lived in the same street, and was frequently giving

half-pence and cakes to the child, who would, in consequence, follow

her anywhere. Some time since, she removed to Lock's Square, Lock's

Fields, and they (the parents) had not seen her for some time. On the

day referred to the child was playing in the street, and not finding

her come home they became alarmed, and went everywhere, broken

hearted, in quest of her, but they could hear no tidings of her till

the sad news was brought them by the officers. The poor mother was now

in attendance, and her feelings were dreadfully affected, and excited

the commiseration of all present.

The prisoner Smith made no defence, and held her head down during

the examination. The child stood by her, and took no notice of the

proceedings, and they were both fully committed for trial. The mother,

on seeing her infant consigned to prison, became quite frantic, and

wept hysterically, and had it it not been for the gaoler, she would

have inflicted some violence upon the woman Smith, for seducing her

infant.

Facts of this kind are sufficient to shew the utility, indeed I may

say, the most absolute necessity of providing some means, far, very

far more efficient than those at present in existence, for the

protection and improvement of the infant poor; that they may not thus

fall into the hands of evil and designing wretches, who make a living

by encouraging the children of the poor to commit crimes, of the

produce of which they themselves take the greatest part.

The younger the children are, the better they suit the purposes of

such miscreants; because, if children are detected in any dishonest

act, they know well, that few persons will do more than give the child

or children a tap on the head, and send them about their business. The

tenth part of the crimes committed by these juvenile offenders never

comes under public view, because should any person be robbed by a

child, and detect him in the act, he is silenced by the by-standers

with this remark,--Oh! he is but a child, let him go this time,

perhaps the poor thing has done it from necessity, being in want of

bread. Thus the delinquent is almost sure to escape, and, instead of

being punished, is not unfrequently rewarded for the adventure, as was

the case in the following instance.

Having had occasion to walk through Shoreditch some time since, I saw

a number of persons collected together round a little boy, who, it

appeared, had stolen a brass weight from the shop of a grocer. The

shopman stated that three boys came into the shop for half-an-ounce of

candied horehound, and that while he was getting down the glass which

contained it, one of them contrived to purloin the weight in question.

Having some suspicion of the boys, from the circumstance of having

recently lost a number of brass weights, he kept his eyes on them,

when he saw one put his hand into a box that was on the counter, take

out the largest weight, and then run out of the shop, followed by the

other two. The boy who stole it, slipped the weight into the hand of

one of the others; but the shopman, having observed this manoeuvre,

followed the boy who had the weight, who, being the youngest of the

three, could not run very fast; he, finding himself closely pursued,

threw the weight into the road, and when he was taken, declared that

it was not he who took it. The man wished to take the child back to

the shop, in order that his master might do with him as he thought

proper, but the by-standers, with a charitable \_zeal\_ which evinced

little \_knowledge\_, prevented him; one man in particular seemed to

interest himself much in the boy's behalf, stating that he knew the

child very well, and that he had neither father nor mother. The child

immediately took up this plea, and added that he had had no victuals

all day. The individual before mentioned then gave him a penny, and

his example was followed by many more, till I think the boy had

obtained nearly a shilling. I put several questions to him, but was

checked by this fellow, who told me, that as I had given the child

nothing, I had no right to ask so much? and, after a great deal of

abuse, he ended by telling me, that if I did not "take myself off" he

would "give me something for myself."

Feeling, however, a great desire to sift further into the matter, I

feigned to withdraw, but kept my eye upon the boy, and followed him

for nearly two hours, until I saw him join two other boys, one of whom

I had not seen before, and who had a bag with something very heavy in

it, which, I have every reason to believe, were weights, or something

which they had obtained in a similar manner. Wishing to ascertain the

fact, I approached them, but they no sooner perceived me, than the

little fellow who had been the principal actor in the affair, called

out "\_Nose, Nose\_,"--a signal-word, no doubt, agreed upon amongst

them,--when they all ran down some obscure alleys. I followed, but

was knocked down, as if by accident, by two ill-looking fellows, who

continued to detain me with apologies till the boys had got safely

away. I have little doubt that this was an instance of that organized

system of depredation of which I have before spoken, and that the

man who took so active a part at the first, was at the bottom of

the business; and, in fact, the tutor and employer of the predatory

urchins. His activity in preventing the boy from being taken back to

the shop--his anxiety to promote a subscription for the boy,--and,

lastly, his threat of personal violence if I interfered in the matter,

by continuing to question the child,--all these circumstances confirm

me in the opinion.

It is only by the knowledge of this fact--the association of infant

offenders with those of maturer and hardened habits--that we can

account for such cases as the following.--On the 17th of July, 1823,

a child \_only seven years old\_, was brought before the magistrate at

Lambeth Street office, charged with frequently robbing his mother,

and was ordered to be locked up all night in the gaol-room. In the

evening, however, when his mother returned, he forced his way out of

the room, and behaved with such violence that the attendants were

obliged to iron both his hands and legs! There can be no doubt that

this child had been for a long time under the instruction and evil

influence of some old and hardened offender; he must, indeed, have

undergone much training before he could have arrived at such a pitch

of hardihood, as to make it necessary to handcuff and fetter a child

of so tender an age; and to enable him to hold even the magistrates,

officers, and his own parent, at defiance.

The following cases afford further proof of the same lamentable truth;

the first is extracted from a morning paper of the 20th of September,

1824. "A little boy, not more than \_six years of age\_, was brought

before the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House, on Saturday, the 18th

instant, having been found in a warehouse, where he had secreted

himself for the purpose of thieving. At a late hour on Friday night,

a watchman was going his round, when, on trying a warehouse in which

there was much valuable property, to see whether it was safe, he heard

the little prisoner cry. The persons who had the care of the warehouse

were roused, and he was taken out. In his fright he acknowledged that

a man had taken him from his mother, and induced him, upon a promise

of reward, to steal into the warehouse; upon a concerted signal, he

was to act as directed by the fellow on the outside; but becoming

terrified at being confined so long in the dark, he had cried out

and discovered himself. His mother came forward, and received a good

character as the wife of a hard-working man. The Lord Mayor gave her

son up to her, with an injunction to act carefully and strictly with

him. There was reason to believe, he said, that several considerable

robberies had been recently committed by means of children like the

prisoner, who stole in and remained concealed until midnight, when

they gave admission to the robbers. The police should have their eyes

upon him."

The other instance is from a report of one of the sessions in

London:--

"William Hart, an urchin \_seven years of age\_, was indicted for

stealing twenty-two shillings in money, numbered, from the person of

Mary Conner. The prosecutrix stated, that on the day named in the

indictment, she took twenty-five shillings to get something out of

pledge, but as there was a crowd in Mary-le-bone, assembled to witness

a fight, she was induced to join the mob. While standing there she

felt something move in her pocket, and putting her hand outside her

clothes, she laid hold of what proved to be the hand of the prisoner,

which she held until she had given him a slap on the face, and then

she let him go; but on feeling in her pocket she discovered that the

theft had actually been committed, and that only three shillings were

left. A constable took the urchin into custody, and accused him of

robbing her of twenty-two shillings. The prisoner said, 'I have

twenty-two shillings in my pocket, but it is my mother's money; she

gets so drunk she gives me her money to take care of.' The officer

stated to the same effect as the prosecutrix, and added, that \_in a

secret pocket in his jacket he found fourteen shilling and sixpence.

It was the practice of gangs of pickpockets to have a child like this

to commit the robbery, and hand the plunder to them\_. Witness went to

his parents, who said he had been absent seven weeks, and they would

have nothing to do with him. Mr. Baron Garrow, in feeling terms,

lamented that a child of such tender years should be so depraved. He

added, 'I suppose, gentlemen, I need only to ask you to deliver your

verdict.' His lordship then observed, that he would consult with his

learned brother as to the best manner of disposing of the prisoner.

They at length decided, that although it might seem harsh, the court

would record against him fourteen years' transportation, and, no

doubt, government would place him in some school; if he behaved well

there, the sentence might not be carried into full effect."

I remember a query being once put to me by a person who visited the

Spitalfields Infant School at the time it was under my management:

"How can you account for the fact, that notwithstanding there are so

many old and experienced thieves detected, convicted, and sent out of

the country every session, we cannot perceive any dimunition of the

numbers of such characters; but that others seem always to supply

their places?" The foregoing instance of the systematized instruction

of young delinquents by old adepts in the art of pilfering, affords, I

think, a satisfactory answer the interrogatory.

The dexterity of experienced thieves shews, that no small degree of

care and attention is bestowed on their tuition. The first task of

novices, I have been informed, is to go in companies of threes or

fours, through the respectable streets and squares of the metropolis,

and with an old knife, or a similar instrument, to wrench off the

brass-work usually placed over the key-holes of the area-gates, &c.,

which they sell at the marine store-shops; and they are said sometimes

to realize three or four shillings a day, by this means. Wishing to

be satisfied on the point, I have walked round many of the squares in

town, and in more than a solitary experiment, have found that \_not one

gate in ten\_ had any brass-work over the key-hole; it had moreover

been evidently wrenched off,--a small piece of the brass still

remaining on many of the gates. Having practised this branch of the

profession a considerable time, and become adepts in its execution,

the next step, I have been informed, is to steal the handles and brass

knockers from doors, which is done by taking out the screw with a

small screw-driver: these are disposed of in the same manner as the

former things, till the young pilferers are progressively qualified

for stealing brass weights, &c., and at length, become expert thieves.

The following fact will shew what extensive depredations young

children are capable of committing. I have inserted the whole as

it appeared in the public papers:--"\_Union Hall\_; \_Shop

Lifting\_.--Yesterday, two little girls, sisters, very neatly dressed,

\_one nine\_, and the \_other seven, years of age\_, were put to the bar,

charged by Mr. Cornell, linen-draper, of High Street, Newington; with

having stolen a piece of printed calico, from the corner of his shop.

"Mr. Cornell stated, that the children came to his shop, yesterday

morning; and while he was engaged with his customers at the further

end of the shop, he happened to cast his eyes where the prisoners

were, and observed the oldest roll up a large piece of printed calico,

and put it into a basket, which her little sister carried: the witness

immediately advanced to her, and asked if she had taken any thing

from off the counter; but she positively asserted that she had not.

However, on searching her basket, the calico was found; together with

a piece of muslin, which Mr. Cornell identified as belonging to him,

and to have been taken in the above way. Mr. Allen questioned the

eldest girl about the robbery, but she positively denied any knowledge

as to how, or in what manner, the calico and muslin had got into her

basket, frequently appealing to her little sister to confirm the truth

of what she declared. When asked if she had ever been charged with any

offence, she replied, 'O yes, sir, some time back I was accused of

stealing a watch from a house, but I did not do it.' The magistrate

observed, that the father should be made acquainted with the

circumstance, and, in the mean time, gave the gaoler instructions that

the two little delinquents should be taken care of.

"Hall, the officer, stated that he had information that there was a

quantity of goods, which had been stolen by the prisoners, concealed

in a certain desk in the house of the father; and that a great deal of

stolen property would, in all probability, be found there, if a search

warrant were granted, as the two unfortunate children were believed to

be most extensive depredators.

"Mr. Allen immediately granted the warrant; and Hall, accompanied by

Mr. Cornell, proceeded to the residence of the father of the children,

who is an auctioneer and appraiser, at 12, Lyon Street, Newington.

"Hall returned in half an hour with the father in his custody, and

produced a great quantity of black silk handkerchiefs, which he had

found on the premises; but the desk, which had been spoken of by his

informers as containing stolen property, he had found quite empty.

The father, when questioned by the witness as to whether he had any

duplicates of property in his possession, positively denied that fact.

At the office he was searched, and about fifty duplicates were found

in his pockets, most of which were for silk handkerchiefs and shawls.

There were also a few rings, for the possession of which the prisoner

could not satisfactorily account. He was asked why he had assured the

officer he had no duplicates? He replied, that he had not said so;

but Mr. Cornell, who was present during the search, averred that the

prisoner had most positively declared that he had not a pawnbroker's

duplicate in his possession.

"Mr. Watt, a linen-draper, of Harper Street, Kent Road, stated that

he attended in consequence of seeing the police reports in the

newspapers, describing the two children; he immediately recognised the

two little girls as having frequently called at his shop for trifling

articles; and added, that he had been robbed of a variety of silk

handkerchiefs and shawls, and he had no doubt but that the prisoners

were the thieves. It was their practice, he said, to go into a shop,

and call for a quarter of a yard of muslin, and while the shopkeeper

was engaged, the eldest would very dexterously slip whatever article

was nearest, to her little sister, who was trained to the business,

and would thrust the stolen property into a basket which she always

carried for that purpose. Mr. Watt identified the silk handkerchiefs

as his property, and said that they had been stolen in the above

manner by the prisoners.

"The father was asked where he had got the handkerchiefs? He replied,

that he had bought them from a pedlar for half-a-crown a piece at his

door. However, his eldest daughter contradicted him by acknowledging

that her sister had stolen them from the shop of Mr. Watt. He became

dreadfully agitated, and then said--'What could I say? Surely I was

not to criminate my own children!'

"Mr. Allen observed, that there was a clear case against the two

children, but after consulting with the other magistrates, he was of

opinion that the youngest child should be given up into the charge of

the parish officers of Newington, as she was too young to go into a

prison, and desired that the other girl should be remanded, in order

to have some of the pledged goods produced. The father was committed

in default of bail for receiving stolen goods. The child has since

been found guilty. The prosecutor stated that the family consisted of

five children, \_not one of whom could read or write\_!"

Another very cruel practice of these young delinquents is, to go

into some chandlers shop as slily as possible, and take the first

opportunity of stealing the till with its contents, there being always

some older thief ready to take charge of it, as soon as the child

removes it from the shop.[A] Many a poor woman has had to lament

the loss of her till, with its contents, taken by a child, perhaps,

scarcely six years of age. There is always a plan laid down for the

child to act upon. Should he be unable to obtain possession of the

till himself, he is instructed to pretend that he has missed his way,

and to inquire for some street near the spot; or, he will address

her with, "Please, ma'am, can you tell me what it is o'clock?" The

unsuspecting woman, with the greatest kindness possible, shews the

child the street he inquires for, or leaves the shop to ascertain the

hour, and for her civility, she is sure to find herself robbed, when

she returns, by some of the child's companions. Should he be detected

in actual possession of the property, he is instructed to act his part

in the most artful manner, by pretending that some man sent him into

the shop to take it, who told him that he would give him sixpence to

buy cakes.

[Footnote A: So complete is the science of pilfering rendered by its

perpetrators, that they have even a peculiar vocabulary of their own,

rendering their conversation, to those who may chance to overhear

them, as mysterious and incomprehensible as though they were

conversing in a foreign tongue; for instance, the scutcheons they

steal from the key holes are called \_porcupines\_; brass weights,

\_lueys\_; while purloining the contents of a till, is called \_taking

the ding\_. In short, they have a peculiar name for almost every

thing.]

It is not uncommon for these young offenders to stop children, whom

they may meet in the street unprotected, and either by artifice or

violence, take from them their hats, necklaces, &c., thus initiating

themselves, as it were, into the desperate crime of assault and

highway robbery.

Young as the subjects of the foregoing narrations mostly were, I have

little doubt their pupilage commenced at a much earlier age; they

could not otherwise have attained so much proficiency in the practice

of crime, and hardihood on detection. However possible it maybe

thought to reclaim children of so tender an age, I am convinced that

thieves of more advanced years become so thoroughly perverted in

their wills and understandings, as to be incapable of perceiving the

disgrace of their conduct, or the enormity of the offence. I was once

told by an old thief that thieving was his profession, and he had

therefore a right to follow it; and I could plainly discover from

further conversation with him, that he had established in himself an

opinion that thieving was no harm, provided he used no violence to

the person; he seemed, indeed, to have no other idea of the rights of

property, than that described as the maxim of a celebrated Scottish

outlaw,--that

"They should take who have the power,

And they should keep who can."

When this most lamentable state is reached, it is to be feared all

modes of punishment, as correctives, are useless; and the only thing

left is to prevent further depredation by banishment.

The incorrigibility which a child may attain, who has once associated

with thieves at an early age, is apparent from the following fact.

"Richard Leworthy, aged fourteen, was indicted for stealing five

sovereigns, the property of William Newling, his master. The

prosecutor stated, that he resided in the Commercial Road, and is

by business a tailor; the prisoner had been his apprentice for four

months, up to the 28th of August, when he committed the robbery. On

that day he gave him five pounds to take to Mr. Wells, of Bishopsgate

Street, to discharge a bill; he never went, nor did he return home; he

did not hear of him for three weeks, when he found him at Windsor, and

apprehended him. The prisoner admitted having applied the money to his

own use. He was found at a public house, and said he had spent all his

money except one shilling and six pence. A shopman in the service of

Mr. Wells, stated that in August last the witness owed his master a

sum of money; he knew the prisoner; he did not bring money to their

shop, either on or since the 28th of August. The prisoner made no

defence, but called his master, who said he received him from the

Refuge for the Destitute, and had a good character with him. He would

not take him back again. Mr. Wontner stated, that he had received

two communications from the Rev. Mr. Crosby, the chaplain of the

institution, stating they would not interfere on his behalf. The jury

returned a verdict of \_guilty\_. Mr. Justice Park observed, that the

best course would be to send him out of the country."

Here we see, that notwithstanding the discipline he had undergone,

and the instructions he had received during his confinement in the

establishment of the Refuge for the Destitute, he had not been more

than four months from that place before he fell into his old habits.

It is moreover to be remarked, that such had been his conduct during

his confinement, that the directors of the establishment thought

themselves war ranted in giving a good character with him. They were

probably little surprised on hearing of this relapse on the part of

the boy,--experience had doubtless taught them it was no uncommon

thing, and we plainly see they were convinced that all further

attempts at reclaiming him were useless.

The facility with which property maybe disposed of, should be

mentioned as a powerful inducement to crime. The following case

suggests it to the mind:

Thomas Jackson, a mere child, not more than nine years of age, was

charged some time ago at the Town Hall, with committing a burglary

on the premises of Mr. James Whitelock, a master builder, Griffith's

Rents, St. Thomas's, Southwark. Mr. Whitelock, it appears, resided

in an old mansion, formerly an inn, which he had divided into two

separate tenements, occupying one part himself, and letting the other

to the parents of the prisoner. In this division he had deposited

building materials to a considerable amount, one hundred weight of

which, in iron holdfasts, hinges, nails, clamps, &c., he missed one

day on entering the room, the door of which had been blocked by a

large copper, and the partition door forced. The character of the

prisoner being of the worst description, he was apprehended, when

he confessed he had taken all the property, and disposed of it to a

woman, named Priscilla Fletcher, the keeper of a marine store, 34,

James Street. The receiver, who is \_the last of the family that has

not been either hanged or transported\_, refused to swear to the

prisoner, though she admitted she believed he was the person she

bought the property produced from, at the rate of one penny for each

three pounds. It was proved to be worth three half-pence per pound.

Alderman J.J. Smith regretted that the deficiency of evidence

prevented him sending the young delinquent for trial, and thereby

rescuing him from an ignominious death, and told Mrs. Priscilla, who

was all modesty, that he was convinced she had perjured herself,--and

not to exult at her own escape from transportation, a reward he could

not help considering she richly merited, and which in due season she

would doubtless receive.

The hardened child laughed during the hearing, and on being sentenced,

by the oath of the officers, as a reputed thief, spit at his accuser,

and exclaimed, as he was taken from the bar to be conveyed to

Brixton,--"Is this all? I'll torment you yet!"

To add one more case, I may state that, at the Exeter Sessions, some

time since, two children were convicted, who, it is believed, were not

above ten years of age. Previously to this they had been convicted of

felony, and had suffered six months imprisonment at Bodmin; and it

appears that two years before, they started alone from Bristol on this

circuit of youthful depredation.

Having collected the foregoing instances of juvenile delinquency, and

presented them to the public, I cannot refrain from adducing a few

other cases which came under my own observation.

Whilst conducting the Spitalfields' Infant School, several instances

of dishonesty in the children occurred. On one occasion the mother

herself came to complain of a little boy, not more than four years

old, on the following grounds. She stated, that being obliged to

be out at work all day, as well as her husband, she was under the

necessity of leaving the children by themselves. She had three besides

the little boy of whom she was complaining. Having to pay her rent,

she put eighteen-pence for that purpose in a cup at the top of a

cupboard. On stepping home to give the children their dinners, she

found the boy at the cupboard, mounted on a chair, which again was

placed on the top of a table. On looking for the money, she found

four-pence already gone; one penny of this she found in his pocket,

the rest he had divided amongst the other children, that they might

not tell of him. After this relation I kept a strict watch on the

child, and three or four days afterwards the children detected him

opening my desk, and taking half-pence out of it. They informed me of

this, and while they were bringing him up to me the half-pence dropped

out of his hand. I detected him in many other very bad actions, but

have reason to hope, that, by suitable discipline and instruction, he

was effectually cured of his sad propensities.

About the same time, I observed two little children very near the

school-house in close conversation, and from their frequently looking

at a fruit-stall that was near, I felt inclined to watch them; having

previously heard from some of the pupils, that they had frequently

seen children in the neighbourhood steal oysters and other things. I

accordingly placed myself in a convenient situation, and had not long

to wait, for the moment they saw there was no one passing, they went

up to the stall, the eldest walking alongside the other, apparently to

prevent his being seen, whilst the little one snatched an orange,

and conveyed it under his pinafore, with all the dexterity of an

experienced thief. The youngest of these children was not four years

old, and the eldest, apparently, not above five. There was reason to

believe this was not the first time they had been guilty of stealing,

though, perhaps, unknown to their parents, as I have found to be the

case in other instances.

Another little boy in the school, whose mother kept a little shop,

frequently brought money with him,--as much as three-pence at a time.

On questioning the child how he came by it, he always said that his

mother gave it to him, and I thought there was no reason to doubt his

word, for there was something so prepossessing in his appearance,

that, at the time, I could not doubt the truth of his story. But

finding that the child spent a great deal of money in fruit, cakes,

&c., and still had some remaining, I found it advisable to see the

mother, and to my astonishment found it all a fiction, for she had not

given him any, and we were both at a loss to conceive how he obtained

it. The child told \_me\_ his mother gave it to him; and he told

his \_mother\_ that it was given to him at school; but when he was

confronted with us both, not a word would he say. It was evident,

therefore, that he had obtained it by some unfair means, and we both

determined to suspend our judgment, and to keep a strict eye on him in

future. Nothing, however, transpired for some time;--I followed him

home several times, but saw nothing amiss. At length I received notice

from the mother, that she had detected taking money out of the till,

in her little shop. It then came out that there was some boy in the

neighbourhood who acted as banker to him, and for every two pence

which he received, he was allowed one penny for taking care of it. It

seems that the child was afraid to bring any more money to school, on

account of being so closely questioned as to where he obtained it, and

this, probably, induced him to give more to the boy than he otherwise

would have done. Suffice it, however, to say, that both children

at length were found out, and the mother declared that the child

conducted her to some old boards in the wash-house, and underneath

them there was upwards of a shilling, which he had pilfered at various

times.

The reader may remember too, that during the autumn of 1833, a boy of

\_fourteen committed suicide\_, and that another of the same age was

convicted of the dreadful crime of \_murder\_.

It appears he knew a boy a little younger than himself, who was going

to a distance with some money, and having taken a pocket-knife with

him, he way-laid him and threatened to murder him. The poor little

victim kneeled down,--offered him his money, his knife, and all he

had, and said he would love him all the days of his life if he would

spare him, and never tell what had happened; but the pathetic and

forcible appeal, which would have melted many a ruffian-heart, was

vain:--the little monster stabbed him in the throat, and then robbed

him. On his trial he discovered no feeling, and he even heard his

sentence with the utmost indifference, and without a tear.

It would have been easy to multiply cases of juvenile delinquency,

both those which have been brought under the cognizance of the law,

and those which have come to my own knowledge, but I think enough has

been related to shew how early children may, and do become depraved.

I have purposely given most of them with as few remarks of my own as

possible, that they may plead their own cause with the reader, and

excite a desire in his bosom to enter with me, in the next chapter, on

an inquiry into the causes of such early depravity.

Since the above incidents and facts were observed, and reports from

the public prints were recorded, general attention has been drawn more

fully to the very great increase of ignorance, demoralization, and

crime, amongst the lower classes, both old and young. These things

call on us most loudly for active effort and exertion; and it becomes

the patriot and philanthropist, but especially the Christian, to look

around, to think and to consider what effectual means may be found,

and what efficient plans may be adopted to strike the evil fatally at

its roots, and cause it to wither away. If these things be not done,

the moral pestilence must increase, and eventually deprive us of all

that is dear to us as men, and citizens.

CHAPTER III.

CAUSES OF EARLY CRIME.

\_Degraded condition of parents--Dreadful effects of

drunkenness--Neglect of children inevitable and wilful--The tutorship

of wicked companions--Tricks of pantomimes injurious--Mischiefs

arising from sending children to pawnbrokers--Fairs demoralizing--All

Kinds of begging to be repressed\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Why thus surprised to see the infant race

Treading the paths of vice? Their eyes can trace

Their \_parents\_' footsteps in the way they go:

What shame, what fear, then, can their young hearts know?"

\* \* \* \* \*

Appalling as the \_effects\_ of juvenile delinquency are, I think we may

discover a principal cause of them in the present condition and habits

of the adult part of the labouring classes. We shall find, very

frequently, that infant crime is the only natural produce of evil,

by the infallible means of precept and example. I do not intend to

assert, that the majority of parents amongst the poor, actually

encourage their children in the commission of theft; we may, indeed,

fear that some do; as in the instance of the two little girls detected

in shop-lifting, whose case was detailed in the preceding chapter; but

still, I should hope that such facts are not frequent. If, however,

they do not give them positive encouragement in pilfering, the example

they set is often calculated to deprave the heart of the child, and,

amongst other evil consequences, to induce dishonesty; whilst in other

cases we find, that from peculiar circumstances the child is deprived,

during the whole day, of the controling presence of a parent, and is

exposed to all the poisonous contamination which the streets of large

cities afford; and hence appears another cause of evil. Here children

come in contact with maturer vice, and are often drawn by its

influence from the paths of innocence; as we have already seen in

many instances. What resistance can the infant make to the insidious

serpents, which thus, as it, were, steal into its cradle, and infuse

their poison into its soul? The guardians of its helplessness are

heedless or unconscious of its danger, and, alas! it has not the

fabled strength of the infant Hercules to crush its venomous

assailants. Surely such a view of the frequent origin of crime must

awaken our commiseration for its miserable victims, and excite in us a

desire to become the defenders of the unprotected.

It will, however, be said by some, "Where are the natural guardians of

the child? Where are its parents? Are we to encourage their neglect

of duty, by becoming their substitutes? It is their business to look

after their children, and not ours." Frequently have I heard such

sentiments put forth, and sometimes by persons in whom I knew they

were rather owing to a want of reflection than of philanthropy. But a

want of thought, or of feeling, it must certainly be; because, on no

principle of reason or humanity can we make the unnatural conduct

of fathers and mothers, a plea for withholding our protection and

assistance from the helpless objects of their cruelty and neglect.

If we do so, we not only neglect our duty towards such children, but

permit the growth and extension of the evil. We must recollect that

they will not merely play their own wicked parts during their lives,

but will also become models to the next generation.

It should be remembered here, that I am treating of an evil which

extends itself to all classes of society; I am appealing to the

prudence of men, that they may, for their own sakes, investigate its

cause; I shall hereafter appeal to them as philanthropists, and, still

more urgently, as Christians, that they may examine the merits of the

remedy I shall propose.

The culpability of many parents is beyond dispute. They not only omit

to set their children good examples, and give them good advice, but,

on the contrary, instil into their minds the first rudiments of

wickedness, and lead them into the paths of vice. Their homes present

scenes which human nature shudders at, and which it is impossible

truly to describe. There are parents who, working at home, have every

opportunity of training up their children "in the way they should go,"

if they were inclined so to do. Instead of this, we often find, in

the case of the fathers, that they are so lost to every principle of

humanity, that as soon as they receive their wages, they leave their

homes, and hasten with eager steps to the public house; nor do they

re-pass its accursed threshold, till the vice-fattening landlord has

received the greater part of the money which should support their

half-fed, half-clothed wives and children; and till they have

qualified themselves, by intoxication, to act worse than brutes on

their return home. To men of this description it matters not whether

or not their children are proving themselves skilful imitators of

their evil example,--they may curse and swear, lie and steal,--so long

as they can enjoy the society of their pot companions, it is to them a

matter of total indifference.

During my superintendence of the first school, I had a painful

facility of examining these matters. Frequently, when I have inquired

the cause of the wretched plight in which some of the children were

sent to the school,--perhaps with scarcely a shoe to their feet,

sometimes altogether without,--I have heard from their mothers the

most heart-rending recitals of the husband's misconduct. One family in

particular I remember, consisting of seven children, two of whom were

in the school; four of them were supported entirely by the exertions

of the mother, who declared to me, that she did not receive a shilling

from their father for a month together; all the money he got he kept

to spend at the public-house; and his family, for what he cared, might

go naked, or starve. He was not only a great drunkard, but a reprobate

into the bargain; beating and abusing the poor woman, who thus

endeavoured to support his children by her labour.

The evil does not always stop here. Driven to the extreme of

wretchedness by her husband's conduct, the woman sometimes takes to

drinking likewise, and the poor babes are ten thousand times more

pitiable than orphans. I have witnessed the revolting sight of a

child leading home both father and mother from the public-house, in

a disgusting state of intoxication. With tears and entreaties I

have seen the poor infant vainly endeavouring to restrain them from

increasing their drunkenness, by going into the houses on their way

home; they have shaken off the clinging child, who, in the greatest

anxiety, waited without to resume its painful task; knowing, all the

time, perhaps, that whilst its parents were thus throwing away their

money, there was not so much as a crust of bread to appease its hunger

at home. Let it not be thought that this is an overcharged picture of

facts; it is but a faint, a very faint and imperfect sketch of reality

which defies exaggeration. Cases of such depravity, on the part of

mothers, I with much pleasure confess to be comparatively rare.

Maternal affection is the preventive. But what, let me ask, can be

hoped of the children of such parents? What are their characters

likely to become under such tuition? With such examples before their

eyes, need they leave their homes to seek contamination, or to learn

to do evil.

And here I must say, if I were asked to point out, in the metropolis,

or any large city, the greatest nuisance, the worst bane of society,

the most successful promoter of vice,--I should, without a moment's

hesitation, point to the first public-house or spirit dealer's

that met my view. Nor can I, in speaking of the causes of juvenile

delinquency, omit to say, I think these houses, indirectly, a very

great cause of it. Why I think so, my readers will readily conceive

from what I have already said. I am sure that Satan has no temple

in which he is so devoutly worshiped, or so highly honoured, as the

ale-house,--no priest is so devoted as its landlord,--no followers are

so zealous in his behalf as its frequenters.

Let any one in the evening visit the homes of the labouring class in

a poor neighbourhood, and he will find, in many cases, a

barely-furnished room, a numerous family of small children,--perhaps

forgetting the pangs of hunger in the obliviousness of sleep,--a wife,

with care-worn features, sitting in solitary wretchedness, ruminating

on wants she knows not how to supply--namely, clothes and food for

her children on the morrow, and on debts which she has no means of

discharging. But where is he who should be sharing her cares, bidding

her be of good cheer, and devising with her some means of alleviating

their mutual distress? Where is the father of the sleeping babes, the

husband of the watchful wife? Go to the public-house; you will see

him there with a host of his companions, of like character

and circumstances, smoking, drinking, singing, blaspheming,

gambling--ruining his health, spending his money; as jovial as though

he had no wretched wife, no starving babes at home! and as lavish of

money which should procure them food, as the man who is thriving on

his excesses could wish him to be.

I never look on a public-house without considering it as the abode of

the evil genius of the neighbourhood; the despoiler of industry, the

destroyer of domestic comfort; and heartily do I wish, that some means

could be devised for abolishing these resorts of wickedness; that some

legislative enactment may render it unlawful for any one to keep such

places. With respect to a peculiar sort of beverage, it has been

declared to be illegal to afford its purchasers accommodation for

drinking it on the premises. Why not extend it to other liquors? I

know this would be pronounced an infringement on English liberty! The

worst of men would raise this outcry against the measure. But surely

it should rather be called a preventive of English licentiousness. All

good men would consider it as such. I would not rob the labourer of

his daily allowance of a beverage which is believed by many to be of

essential service, when taken in moderation; but I would have him

drink it at home, that his wife and children may participate in his

enjoyment. Perhaps, it will be said, a man closely confined to labour

all day, needs some relaxation from domestic cares--that this can only

be found in change of scene, and in social company. I will concede

this. The plea of health, though often speciously advanced, cannot be

denied. But is it necessary for his health, that this change of scene

should be found in a close tap-room, within a few yards of his home,

where he drinks to a ruinous excess till a late hour,--breathing all

the while a hot atmosphere of tobacco-smoke? Is it not possible to

obtain the change of scene, and the relaxation of social converse, by

mutual visits amongst friends similarly situated,--by a ramble to the

suburbs,--or, in cases where the daily occupation affords too little

opportunity for exercise, are there not places established for

gymnastic exercises,--and might not others be formed for the like

purposes? Certain I am that the abolition of public-houses, in large

cities, as places of daily resort for the adult labouring poor, would

be attended with the most salutary consequences. I know of nothing

that must so certainly tend to their improvement both in character and

circumstances.

No man can witness the scenes, and doings, of many persons who attend

the new beer-houses, without pain and regret, that ever an act of

parliament was passed to legalize such places. I have visited some

hundreds of such, throughout the country, and can positively assert

that the demoralising tendency of too many is awful! Our magistrates

must be more careful in granting licences, or the efforts of the wise

and good will be neutralized, by the evils concocted at such places.

The old inkeepers had a character, and capital at stake. The new

beerhouse-keepers, I should say, a majority of them at least, have

neither, and consequently are less cautious, having less to lose.

Whatever the end of the legislature might have been in enabling the

poor to procure a good and cheap article more easily, to be drunk on

or off the premises, the thing has not answered the end, and no one

can deny, who will take the trouble to visit such places in different

counties, that the \_Act\_ has been a miserable failure, and has been

the fruitful source of crime and immorality. What a lesson is this for

speculative, short sighted legislators?

Another measure should then be adopted, I would say--destroy the

facility of spirit-drinking, by laying on a heavy duty. It is in vain

that interested sophistry would plead its benefits in particular

cases--such, for instance, as the ludicrous plea of the needfulness

of drams for market-women on wet and frosty mornings.[A] Set these

specious benefits against the dreadful results to men's health and

pockets, from the present low price of spirits, and their consequent

enormous consumption; and then let common sense and honesty deliver

its judgment.

I have spoken thus candidly and at length upon the subject in the

present chapter, though somewhat out of place, because my feelings

would not allow me to be less plain or more brief, or to postpone

the matter to "a more convenient season." Perhaps in talking of

legislative alterations I have been wandering upon forbidden ground;

if so, in returning to my proper path, I will comfort myself with this

thought:--the progress of improvement, however slow, is sure, and it

is certainly advancing in this country; I require no other assurance

than the establishment of Infant Schools and Mechanic's.

[Footnote A: Some conception of the fearful height which drunkenness

has attained, may be gathered from the fact, that in 1829, the

quantity of distilled spirits on which the duty was paid in the three

kingdoms, amounted to 23,000,000 of gallons. To form a due estimate,

however, of the actual consumption, an immense quantity must be added,

obtained by smuggling. Of the rum imported for home consumption,

allowing for that re-exported, the quantity was 5,000,000 of gallons.

Of brandy and other articles imported, 1,500,000 gallons; making a

total, with the omission of all on which the duty was evaded, of

30,000,000 of gallons of ardent spirits consumed in the year.

Five millions of revenue grew out of this, but it cost the people

15,000,000\_l\_. sterling, a which would have paid half-a-year's

interest of the national debt.]

"No person," says Sir Astley Cooper "has greater hostility to dram

drinking than myself, insomuch that I never suffer any ardent spirits

in my house--thinking \_them evil spirits!\_--and if the poor could

witness the white livers, the dropsies, the shattered nervous systems

which I love seen as the consequence of drinking, they would be aware

that \_spirits\_ and \_poisons\_ were synonymous terms."

Institutions; it \_will\_ advance, and what the legislature may never be

able to accomplish, the spirit of improvement eventually will.

But having considered those cases, in which wilful neglect and bad

example may be charged upon the parents, we should not forget to tell

those who object to our interference in the duty of a child's natural

protectors, that it is not, in every instance, from \_wilful\_ neglect

on their part, that their children are left unprotected in the

streets. The circumstances of the labouring classes are such, in many

cases, that they are compelled to leave their children either wholly

unprotected, or in the charge of some one who frequently becomes a

betrayer instead of a defender. The father, perhaps, goes to his daily

labour in the morning, before the children are out of bed, and does

not return till they are in bed again at night. The mother goes out in

like manner, the earnings of the husband being insufficient for the

maintenance of the family, and the children are intrusted throughout

the day to the care of some girl, whose parents are as poor as

themselves, and are glad to let her earn something towards her

support. Numbers of little girls thus go out before they are twelve

years old, and teach the little children all they know,--commonly

to be deceitful, and not unfrequently to be dishonest. The parents,

careless or unsuspecting, only make inquiry when they return home if

the children have been good and quiet, and of course receive an answer

in the affirmative. In the course of a few years the evil consequences

begin to show themselves, and then the good folks wonder how or when

the seeds of such depravity could have been sown. Many I know will be

inclined to smile at the insignificancy of the cause pointed out. I

can only say, it is from such springs, however regarded, that the

great stream of vice is supplied; and what we laugh at now, for its

insignificant origin, will hereafter, in its maturity, laugh at us for

our impotence, in vainly endeavouring to stem it. What are parents to

do with their children, situated as those are of whom we have just

spoken? And very many are so situated. Is it possible for them to

perform their duty, as protectors of their children? It requires all

their time to labour for their support, and they therefore leave them,

unavoidably, either in such hands as we have described, or to take

care of themselves; to range the streets, and form such associations

as may there happen to fall in their way. They get into company with

older delinquents, and become first their instruments, and then their

associates; till at length they find their way into a gaol.

This is no delusive way of accounting for the matter,--it is a

solution which experience and observation have taught and established.

I have traced the progress of delinquency, in actual life, from

its earliest stages,--from the little trembling pilferer of the

apple-stall, not more than four or five years old, to the confirmed

thief of nine or ten years--who had been in gaol three or four times,

and was as proud of his dexterity in thieving, and hardihood under

punishment, as he could have been of the most virtuous accomplishment,

or the most becoming fortitude. The infant thief, conscious of shame,

and trembling with fear, will tell you on detection, that "Tommy," or

"Billy," some older associate, set him to do it; you let him go: he

joins his companions, who laugh at the story he tells, ridicule him

for his fears, praise him for his dexterity, and rejoice in his

escape. It will be very easy to imagine how, under a course of such

treatment, the young offender so soon dismisses both shame and fear;

and learns to forget everything but the gain and glory of his crimes.

It is no small matter of credit with older thieves--(by older thieves

I still mean boys of nine or ten years old)--to have under their

tuition two or three pupils. I have seen in my walks as many as seven

or eight sallying forth from the alleys in the neighbourhood of

Spitalfields, under the command, as it were, of a leader, a boy

perhaps not more than nine or ten years old. I have watched their

plans, and have noticed that it was usual to send first the youngest

boy to attempt the theft--perhaps the object to be obtained was only

a bun from the open window of a pastry-cook's shop; if he failed,

another was sent, whilst the rest were lurking at the corner of some

court, ready to flee in case their companion was detected; and I have

sometimes seen, that after all the rest had failed, either from want

of skill, or the too great vigilance of the shop-keeper, the boy

who acted as leader has started out, and by a display of superior

dexterity, would have carried off the prize, had it not happened that

some one was thus purposely watching his conduct. When detected, if an

old offender, he will either look you in tire face with the greatest

effrontery and an expression of defiance, or he will feign to cry,

and tell you he was hungry, has no father nor mother, &c.; though

frequently, on further inquiry, I have found the whole story to be

false.

Alas! there is \_one\_ class of children, with whom I know not how to

deal, I mean those without the natural protectors. The man can for a

more trifle get rid of all responsibility, though in general, most

able to bear it, the woman has the dead weight, which often proves the

destruction of her offspring, and herself, suicide and murder are

the first-fruits frequently to her, but she loves her offspring, and

perhaps he who deceived her, and for both their sakes fights the

battle against fearful odds; for a few years at least, she will not

last long, at length she sinks! she dies! where, oh! where! is the

guardian for her child! Reader, there are many thousands of such!

What becomes of them? But there are other mothers of this class,

more ignorant, have less of feeling, no education, no training, they

advance from bad to worse, until they have five or six children, here

are circumstances for children to come into the world grievously

against them. What becomes of these? To avoid painful details I will

answer the question, they become a pest to society, each a demoralizer

of others, living upon the public--as tramps, begging impostors,

thieves, teachers of thieves, and \_cost the country more than five

times their number born under other and better circumstances\_. God

grant that spiritual light, philosophical light, and scientific light

united, may enable us to find the remedy!

The two grand causes of juvenile delinquency, we have seen then, to be

the evil example of parents themselves; and the bad associations

which children form at an early age, when, through neglect, they are

suffered to be in the streets. In the first instance, the parents of

the children are wholly without excuse; in the second, though in some

cases we may blame them, in others we cannot justly do so; but must

admit, as an exculpation, the unfortunate circumstances of their

condition in life.

It would be easy to shew, by a multitude of instances, the evil

effects produced on children of a tender age by street associations.

But I think enough has been said to convince every reflecting mind

that it is highly necessary that we should interfere in behalf of

children so situated; and I shall conclude the present chapter by some

remarks on the various habits and practices of the poor classes, which

have at least an injurious tendency on the character of the rising

generation.

As children are such imitative beings, I cannot help making a few

observations on the tricks which are usually introduced into our

\_pantomimes\_. It is well known that those of the clown form a

principal part of the entertainment. It is also equally well known,

that the pantomimes are particularly designed to amuse children, for

which reason they are generally represented during the Christmas

holidays, If, however, they were merely intended to \_amuse\_ them, they

who have introduced them have, perhaps, gained their object; but what

kind of \_instruction\_ they afford, I shall here attempt to shew. I

do not recollect to have seen a pantomime myself without \_pilfering\_

being introduced under every possible form, such as shop lifting,

picking pockets, &c. &c. Can it then be for a moment supposed

improbable that children, after having witnessed these exhibitions,

should endeavour to put the thing into practice, whenever an

opportunity offers, and try whether they cannot take a handkerchief

from a gentleman's pocket with the same ease and dexterity as the

clown in the play did; or, if unsuccessful in this part of the

business, that they should try their prowess in carrying off a

shoulder of mutton from a butcher's shop,--a loaf from a baker,--or

lighter articles from the pastry-cools, fruiterer, or linen-draper?

For, having seen the dexterity of the clown, in these cases, they will

not be at a loss for methods to accomplish, by sleight of hand, their

several purposes. In my humble opinion, children cannot go to a better

place for instruction in these matters, or to a place more calculated

to teach them the art of pilfering to perfection, than to the theatre,

when pantomimes are performed. To say that the persons who write and

introduce these pieces are in want of \_sense\_, may not be true; but I

must charge them with a want of sufficient thought, right feeling and

principle, in not calculating on their baneful effects on the rising

generation, for whose amusement it appears they are chiefly produced.

Many unfortunate persons, who have heard sentence of death passed upon

them, or who are now suffering under the law, in various ways, have

had to lament that the \_first seeds of vice were sown in their minds

while viewing the pilfering tricks of clowns in pantomimes\_. Alas!

too little do we calculate on the direful effects of this species of

amusement on the future character of the young. We first permit their

minds to be poisoned, by offering them the draught, and then punish

them by law for taking it. Does not the wide world afford a variety

of materials sufficient for virtuous imitation, without descending to

that which is vicious? It is much easier to make a pail of pure water

foul, than it is to make a pail of foul water pure. It must not be

supposed that I wish to sweep off every kind of amusement from the

juvenile part of society, but I do wish to sweep off all that has a

pernicious tendency. The limits which I have prescribed to myself will

not allow me to enter more at large into this subject; otherwise

I could produce a number of facts which would prove, most

unquestionably, the propriety of discontinuing these exhibitions.

A conversation which I once heard between some boys who were playing

at what is called \_pitch-in-the-hole\_, will prove the truth of my

assertions. "Bill," said one of the boys to the other, "when did you

go to the play last?" "On Monday night," was the reply. "Did you see

the new pantomime?"--"Yes." "Well, did you see any fun?"--"Yes, I

believe I did too. I saw the clown \_bone\_ a whole \_hank\_ of sausages,

and put them into his pocket, and then pour the gravy in after them.

You would have split your sides with laughing, had you been there.

A.B. and C.D. were with me, and they laughed as much as I did.

And what do you think A.B. did the next night?"--"How should I

know."--"Why," replied the other, "he and C.D. \_boned\_ about two

pounds of sausages from a pork shop, and we had them for supper." This

conversation I heard from a window, which looked into a ruinous place

where boys assembled to toss up for money, and other games. This fact

alone, without recording any more, is sufficient to show the evil of

which I have been speaking. And I do most sincerely hope that those

persons who have any influence over the stage, will use their utmost

endeavours, speedily, to expunge every thing thus calculated to

promote evil inclinations in the minds of children, and vicious habits

in the lives of men.

It is not impossible that scenic exhibitions might be made a most

powerful means of instruction to the young, and tend to promote virtue

and happiness, as well as be a means of rational amusement, but as

they now exist, their extirpation is desirable.

As I have had much experience from being brought up in London, I am

perfectly aware of the evil impressions and dangerous temptations that

the children of the poor are liable to fall into; and therefore most

solemnly affirm that nothing in my view would give so much happiness

to the community at large, as the taking care of the affections of the

infant children of the poor.

There is, moreover, a practice very prevalent among the poor, which

does greater mischief than the people are generally aware of, and that

is, sending their children to the \_pawnbrokers\_. It is well known that

many persons send children, scarcely seven years of age, to these

people, with pledges of various sorts, a thing that cannot be too

severely condemned. I know an instance of a little boy finding a shawl

in the street; and being in the habit of going to the pawnbroker's

for his mother, instead of taking the shawl home to his parents, he

actually pawned it and spent all the money, which might never have

been known by his parents, had not the mother found the duplicate in

his pocket. It is evident, then, that many parents have no one but

themselves to blame for the misconduct of their children; for had this

child not been accustomed to go to such a place \_for his parents\_, he

would never have thought of going there \_for himself\_; and the shawl

most likely would have been carried home to \_them\_. Indeed, there

is no knowing where such a system will end, for if the children are

suffered to go to such places, they may in time pledge that which does

not belong to them; and so easy is the way of turning any article

into money, that we find most young thieves, of both sexes, when

apprehended, have some duplicates about them. Those persons,

therefore, who take pledges of children (contrary to the act of

parliament, whether they know it or not,) ought to be severely

reprimanded; for I am persuaded, that such conduct is productive of

very great mischief indeed.

Taking children to \_fairs\_, is another thing which is also productive

of much harm. At the commencement of the first school, seventy or

eighty children were frequently absent whenever there was a fair near

London; but the parents were afterwards cured of this, and we seldom

had above twenty absentees at fair-time. Several of the children have

told me that their parents wished to take them, but they requested to

be permitted to come to school instead. Indeed the parents, finding

that they can enjoy themselves better without their children, are very

willing to leave them at school.

It is a difficult matter to persuade grown persons of the impropriety

of attending fairs, who have been accustomed to it when children;

but children are easily persuaded from it; for if they are properly

entertained at school, they will not have the least desire to go to

such places.

I cannot quit this subject without relating one or two more very bad

habits to which children are addicted, and which are, perhaps, fit

subjects for the consideration of the \_Mendicity Society\_. As it is

the object of that society to clear the streets of beggars, it would

be well if they would put a stop to those juvenile beggars, many of

whom are children of respectable parents, who assemble together

to build what they call a GROTTO; to the great annoyance of all

passengers in the street. However desirous persons may be of

encouraging ingenuity in children, I think it is doing them much harm

to give them money when they ask for it in this way. Indeed it would

appear, that some of the children have learned the art of begging so

well, that they are able to vie with the most experienced mendicants.

Ladies in particular are very much annoyed by children getting before

them and asking for money; nor will they take the answer given them,

but put their hats up to the ladies' faces, saying, "Please, ma'am,

remember the grotto;" and when told by the parties that they have

no money to give, they will still continue to follow, and be as

importunate as any common beggar. However innocent and trifling this

may appear to some, I am inclined to believe that such practices tend

to evil, for they teach children to be mean, and may cause some of

them to choose begging rather than work. I think that the best way to

stop this species of begging is, never to give them any thing. A fact

which came under my own observation will shew that the practice may

be productive of mischief. A foreign gentleman walking up Old Street

Road, was surrounded by three or four boys, saying, "Please, sir,

remember the grotto."--"Go away," was the reply, "I will give you

none." To this followed, "Do, pray sir, remember the grotto." "No, I

tell you, I will give you nothing." "Do, sir, only once a-year." At

length, I believe, he put something into one of their hats, and thus

got rid of them; but he had scarcely gone 200 yards, before he came

to another grotto, and out sallied three more boys, with the same

importunate request: he replied, "I will give you nothing; plague have

you and your grotto." The boys however persevered, till the gentleman,

having lost all patience, gave one of them a gentle tap to get out of

the way, but the boy being on the side of the foot-path fell into the

mud, which had been scraped off the road, and in this pickle followed

the gentleman, bellowing out, "That man knocked me down in the mud,

and I had done nothing to him." In consequence, a number of persons

soon collected, who insulted the gentleman very much, and he would

certainly have been roughly handled, had he not given the boy

something as a recompence. He then called a coach, declaring he could

not walk the streets of London in safety.

Those who know what mischief has arisen from very trifling causes,

will, of course, perceive the necessity of checking this growing evil;

for this man went away with very unfavourable impressions concerning

our country, and would, no doubt, prejudice many against us, and make

them suppose we are worse than we are.

Nearly allied to this is, "Pray remember poor Guy Faux;" which not

only teaches children the art of begging, but is frequently the means

of their becoming dishonest, for I have known children break down

fences, and water-spouts, and, in short, any thing that they could lay

their hands upon, in order to make a bonfire, to the great danger of

the inhabitants near it, without producing one good effect. Yet how

easily might this practice be put down. The ill effects of it are so

self-evident, that there can be no need for further enlargement.

I also disapprove of children going about begging at Christmas; this

practice is calculated to instil into the children's minds a principle

of meanness not becoming the English character, and the money they

get, seldom, if ever, does them any good. If persons choose to give

children any thing at this time of the year, there can be no objection

to it, but I dislike children going about to ask for money like common

beggars; it cannot be proper, and should be generally discountenanced.

All these things, to some men, may appear trifling, but to me and

others they are of consequence; for if we mean to improve the general

character of the labouring population, there is nothing like beginning

in time; and we should, amongst other things, get rid of all mean and

improper customs.

Before concluding this chapter I would hint to travellers not to give

children money for running after a coach. I have seen children of both

sexes run until their breath failed, and, completely exhausted, drop

down on the grass; merely because some injudicious persons had thrown

halfpence to them. I have also seen little boys turn over and over

before the horses, for the purpose of getting money, to the danger of

their own lives and of the passengers; and I recollect an instance of

one boy being, in consequence, killed on the spot. In some counties

children will, in spring and summer, run after a carriage with flowers

upon a long stick, thrusting it in the coach or the faces of the

travellers, begging halfpence, which habit had been taught them by the

same injudicious means.

The most virtuous and pious of men, on looking back to their early

lives, have almost invariably confessed that they owe the first

seeds of what is excellent in them, to the blessing of God, on the

instruction and example of their parents, and those around them in the

years of their childhood.

Reflections like these ought to make us humble and thankful for the

advantages we have enjoyed, and cause us to look with an eye of pity,

charity, and commiseration on the vices and delinquencies of the poor,

rather than to judge them with harsh and cruel severity. Had we been

in their places, might not--would not--our character and conduct have

been as theirs?--Still further, ought not such thoughts as these to

touch our hearts with deep compassion for them, and excite us to

strenuous endeavours to remedy these lamentable evils, by the most

powerful and effective measures that can be found; and more especially

to strive if possible to rescue the rising generation from the

contamination of surrounding vice and misery.

CHAPTER IV.

REMEDY FOR EXISTING EVILS.

\_Means long in operation important--Prisons awfully

corrupting--Deplorable condition of those released from

jail--Education of the infant poor--Its beneficial results--Cases

of inviolable honesty--Appeal of Mr. Serjeant Bosanquet--The infant

school, an asylum from accidents, and a prevention of various

evils--Obstacles in the way of married persons obtaining

employment--Arguments for the plan of infant training--Prevalence of

profane swearing--The example often shewn by parents--Anecdote in

illustration--Parents ill used by their young children--Christian-like

wish of George III.--Education for poor children still objected

to--Folly of such objections illustrated--Lectures on the subject of

infant training\_.

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"The most likely and hopeful reformation of the road must begin with

children. Wholesome laws and good sermons are but slow and late ways;

the timely and most compendious way is a good education."--\_Archbishop

Tillotson\_.

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Having brought the prevalency of juvenile delinquency immediately

before the eyes of my readers, by various examples in the second

chapter, and in the third exhibited a few of the causes of it, I shall

now proceed to point out what, in my humble opinion appears to be the

only efficient remedy, namely, the education of the infant poor.

It may not be amiss, however, to glance at the means which have

heretofore been employed, and found, though productive of some good,

inefficient for the end proposed.

As preventives, I may notice the numerous national and Sunday schools,

tract societies, &c., established throughout the kingdom. These have

doubtless much good effect, and deserve the zealous support of every

one who has at heart the welfare of society in general, and the

improvement of the labouring classes in particular. Many have been

plucked, "as brands from the burning," by these institutions; which

are a blessing to the objects of their benevolence, and an honour to

their conductors and supporters. That Sunday schools are not wholly

efficient, in conjunction with other institutions, to accomplish

the end desired, is to be attributed, on the one hand, to the small

portion of time in which their salutary influence is exerted; and, on

the other, to their not admitting children at a sufficiently early

age. At the period usually assigned for their entrance, they have not

only acquired many evil habits, but their affections have become

so thoroughly perverted, as to offer great, and, in some cases,

insuperable obstacles to the corrective efforts of their teachers.

Each child brings into the school some portion of acquired evil,

making, when united, a formidable aggregate, and affording every

facility for mutual contamination. Add to this, the counteracting

effect which the bad examples they meet with in the course of six days

must have upon the good they hear on the seventh, and it will be seen

how little comparatively is really practicable. I do not say this to

dishearten those who are engaged in this labour of love, or to abate

the zeal of its promoters. At the same time that their experience

confirms the truth of my observations--and I know they would candidly

confess that it does so--they must have many gratifying instances of a

contrary nature, in children, who from evil habits have been won to

a love of goodness and religion, shewn not merely in a punctual

attendance at their school, but in that good-will toward their

fellow-scholars, and grateful love to their teachers, which are the

only infallible signs of a change in the affections. These things

encourage them, in spite of many difficulties and mortifications, to

persevere in well doing; and may the God of love bless their labours

with an increase of fruitfulness! It is only my purpose here to state,

that the most likely human means to produce such an increase, is the

establishment of infant schools;--schools designed, particularly, for

the cultivation of the affections,--for preparing the heart to receive

that wisdom which teaches us to love God supremely, and to love our

neighbour as ourselves. As to the system of instruction pursued in

Sunday schools, as well as other free schools, it is, indeed, my

opinion, that some alteration for the better might be made, but as I

intend to speak of this matter in a future place, I shall say no

more on the subject at present, but pass on to notice prison

discipline--which is, I fear, entitled to any term but that of a

\_remedy\_.

That the end of punishment should be the prevention of future crime,

rather than the gratification of vindictive feelings--whether those of

states or of injured individuals--but few will venture to deny; and

yet how little calculated is the punishment usually inflicted on young

offenders in this country, to answer that end! They are shut up in

a prison, in company with other thieves, perhaps older and more

experienced than themselves, and all that was wanting to complete

their education in dishonesty is here attained. Previously to their

confinement within the walls of one of these places, in spite of the

assertions of their hardened associates, that it was nothing to fear,

it is probable, dread or apprehension hung over their minds; the last

vestige of shame had not been banished by a public appearance as

criminals--and this, properly taken advantage of, might have made

their reformation possible! But, having encountered the object of

their fears, and endured the shame of a trial--shame and fear are

alike gone for ever; and when once they find their way into those

sinks of iniquity, there is very little hope of amendment. From that

period a prison has not the least terror for them. Being a place of

idleness while there, it calls forth the evil inclinations of

its inmates, and as they have opportunities of indulging those

inclinations, it not only loses all its utility, but becomes

incalculably injurious. I heard a boy who had been confined in Newgate

say, that he did not care any thing about it; that his companions

supplied him with plenty of victuals, that there was some good fun to

be seen there, and that most likely he should soon be there again;

which proved too true, for he was shortly after taken up again for

stealing two pieces of printed calico, and transported. This, with a

multitude of similar facts, will shew that there are few who do not

become more depraved, and leave such places worse than when they

entered them. A gentleman who visited Newgate informed me that he had

been very much surprised at finding so many children there; some of

whom were ironed; and on his inquiring the cause of such severity

towards children so young, he was told by one of the turnkeys, that

\_he had snuck more trouble with them than he had with old offenders\_.

This fact has been verified by the chief officers of the Wakefield

Model Prison,--the boys give most trouble. In the matter of treating

juveniles as delinquents, I am sure we are wrong. I have seen both the

magistrates and the judges insulted on the bench by juveniles brought

before them, and taunted with the following: "You can do no more, you

with the big wig! I wish you may sit there until I come out!" And in

the month of May, 1852, the magistrates of Wakefield were insulted by

a boy 15 years old, who had been taken up as an impostor, with his

arm doubled in a sling, and shamming to be deaf and dumb,--a healthy

strong youth, able and fit for work--and when asked why he did not

work, answered, because he could get more by his own method! Hear!

this ye indiscriminate alms-givers! And, further, when expostulated

with by the magistrates for the sin and wickedness of pretending to

be lame, &c., he laughed at them outright for being so silly as to

suppose that he should not \_live well if he could?\_ When told he

should be committed for three months, he had the impudence to tell the

court that he would do the same again, when he came out, clapped his

hat on in open defiance, and shouted, "That's all you can do!" The

chairman expressed sorrow that he could not order a whipping, but

the prisoner laughed at him, and said, "I am too old for that." Such

things were not known in my younger days. I am afraid we have erred

in this matter. A little wholesome correction did wonders. In such

matters, it, at least, made the parties civil, and, I think, deterred

from crime. I am fearful that in this age mankind aim in some things

to be more perfect than the Great Ruler of the Universe!

To the bad habits of a prison, and the association with guilt, must be

added the deplorably unprovided state, in which, at the termination of

their period of imprisonment, they are sent forth into society. What

friends have they but their former companions? What habitations,

but their former resorts of iniquity? What means of procuring a

livelihood, but their former evil practices? We accordingly find, that

it is not unfrequently the case, with these young offenders, that

scarcely a day elapses after their liberation, before they find

themselves again in custody, and within the walls of a prison. One

cannot, indeed, view the exertions made by the "Society for the

Improvement of Prison Discipline" in this respect, without feelings of

gratitude to those who take an active part in it[A]; neither should we

forget to return thanks to the Author of all good, that he should

have encouraged the hearts of persons to venture even their lives, to

improve the condition of the prisoners in Newgate and elsewhere;--that

even females are found, who, conquering the timidity and diffidence

of their sex, have visited these abodes of vice and misery, for the

purpose of ameliorating the condition of their inhabitants. There have

been men, claiming to be considered wise men, who have ridiculed the

exertions of these daughters of philanthropy, and have made them

objects of ridicule, but, happily, they are impervious to the shafts

of folly; and as heedless of the unjust censures, as they are

undesirous of the applause of man. Their aim is, the good of their

fellow-creatures,--their reward, the pleasure of doing good, and the

approbation of Him who is goodness itself. That their well-meant and

praiseworthy exertions are not more successful can only be accounted

for by the awfully depraved affections which habitual vice produces;

when every principle of action, which should be subservient to virtue,

becomes actively employed in the cause of wickedness; for, whatever

may be the impulse which first induces offenders to do wrong, they

become, in course of time, so totally lost to all sense of what is

good as to "glory in their shame." Whether it maybe possible to devise

any plan of prison discipline sufficient to remedy the evil, I

cannot pretend to say; and I shall only repeat the burthen of my

song--\_educate and protect the infant poor\_; and it will be found that

\_to prevent\_ is not only better, but easier, than to \_cure\_.

[Footnote A: I will make a short extract from one of its reports,

to shew, that the chief end they have in view, is the prevention of

crime. They state, that "in the course of their visit, to the gaols

in the metropolis, the Committee very frequently meet with destitute

boys, who, on their discharge from confinement, literally know not

where to lay their heads. To assist such friendless outcasts has

been the practice of the society; and to render this relief more

efficacious, a temporary refuge has been established for such as

are disposed to abandon their vicious courses. This asylum has been

instrumental in affording assistance to a considerable number of

distressed youths, who, but for this seasonable aid, must have

resorted to criminal practices for support. On admission into this

establishment, the boys are instructed in moral and religious duty,

subjected to habits of order and industry, and after a time are placed

in situations which afford a reasonable prospect of their becoming

honest and useful members of society. To extend these objects, and to

render its exertions more widely beneficial, the society solicits the

aid of public benevolence. Its expenses are unavoidably serious, and

its funds are at present very low; but it is trusted that pecuniary

support will not be withheld, when it is considered, that on the

liberality with which this appeal is answered, depends, in a great

measure, the success of the society's objects--the reformation of the

vicious, and the prevention of crime."]

That this remedy is effectual, experience has taught me and many

others; and experience is a guide on whom we may safely rely. It has

shown me that by taking children at an early age out of the reach of

contamination in the streets, and removing them in a great measure

from the no less baneful influence of evil example at home, we may lay

such a foundation of virtue, as is not likely to be shaken. Nor do I

think it difficult to show the reason of this. It is confessed on all

hands that our first impressions are the most powerful, both as to

their immediate effects and future influence; that they not only form

the character of our childhood, but that of our maturer years. As the

mind of a child expands, it searches for new objects of employment or

gratification; and this is the time when the young fall an easy prey

to those who make a business of entrapping them into the paths of

dishonesty, and then of urging them to crimes of deeper dye. What,

then, but a most salutary result can ensue from placing a child in a

situation, where its first impressions will be those of the beauty of

goodness,--where its first feelings of happiness will consist in the

receiving and cherishing kind ness towards its little neighbours? In

after years, and in schools for older children, it is reckoned an

unavoidable evil, that they should be congregated together in numbers;

not so in the infant school; it is there made use of as a means of

developing and exercising those kindly feelings, which must conduce

to the individual and general comfort, not only there, but in society

generally. It is not merely by instructing them in \_maxims\_ of honesty

that we seek to provide against the evil; but by the surer way of

exciting that feeling of love towards each other--towards every

one--which, when found in activity, must not only prevent dishonesty,

but every other species of selfishness.

Consider the difference of the cases. In the one case we behold

a child associated, in happy communion, with a society--a little

world--of its own age and feelings,--continually proving the

possibility of giving and imparting happiness by receiving

and exercising kindness to its companions--secured from every

danger--supplied with a constant variety of amusement, which is at

the same time instruction; and all this under the care of a master or

mistress; acting the part, not of a petulant school-dame, or a stern

pedagogue, but of a kind and judicious parent.

In the case of the child not thus befriended, we see it, either

exposed to the dangerous associations of the street, or to the

bad examples of its parents; to their unkindness and severity, or

misguided indulgence; and presented, moreover, with every facility, as

well as every temptation, to do wrong. Now, is it to be wondered at,

that, in the former case, kind, obedient, honest characters should

be the result; and in the latter, such as we have, in our preceding

examples, exhibited? Reason tells us such a consequence is likely, and

experience has shewn us that it really happens. I could enumerate a

thousand cases of honest principle in the infants who have been

under my own care; but I can only mention one or two circumstances

illustrative of the matter.

I once had, for example, two little boys to travel with me; their

assistance was extremely valuable in organizing schools. They were

often invited to accompany me at dinner; the guests generally gave

them presents. I have watched them under many tempting circumstances,

and never found them steal. It is my firm conviction that dishonesty

is chiefly the effect of neglect. No child can be \_born\_ a \_thief\_,

in the strict sense of the term. In many schools, too, there are

fruit-trees planted in the play-ground, to which the children will not

do the least injury, nor will they touch the fruit. Flowers in pots,

such as geraniums, auriculas, and other plants, are placed in the

middle of the play-ground, without the least danger of being injured.

Such is their respect to private property.

Another instance particularly excited my notice amongst the children

in the first establishments in London. They were permitted to bring

their dinners with them, and there were boxes in the school to put

them in. Every child in the school had access to these boxes, for they

were never locked, and yet I never knew a child to lose his dinner, or

any part of it, notwithstanding many of the children, to my knowledge,

had been kept extremely short of food. I have known an instance of a

slice of bread and butter being left in the box for several weeks, by

some child that could not eat it, but none of the other children would

dare to touch it. I have found in the boxes two or three pieces of

bread, as hard as possible, and as a proof that many were hungry, and

that it did not remain there because they could not eat it, but out of

pure honesty, I have offered it to some of the children, and they have

eaten it in that state. Cold potatoes, pieces of fat, &c., were not

unacceptable to them when given; but sooner than take any thing

without leave, they have actually left it to spoil. These are facts

which shew, that notwithstanding all the disadvantages to which the

poor children are exposed, their character may be so far formed as to

produce the effects above described. "Would you take a piece of bread

out of this box that did not belong to you?" said I to the children

one day. "No, sir," replied a little girl of four years old. "Why

not?" "Because," said the child, "it would be thieving." "Well, but

suppose no one saw you?" Before I could speak another word, a number

of the children answered, "God can see everything that we do." "Yes,"

added another little boy, "if you steal a cherry, or a piece of

pencil, it is wicked." "To be sure," added another, "it is wicked to

steal any thing."

I cannot do better than introduce in this place the opinion of Judge

Bosanquet, on the subject of the education of the infant poor; and

some valuable hints will likewise be found in his remarks on prison

discipline. It is an extract from a charge to the jury delivered at

the Gloucester assizes for April, 1823. "Gentlemen, I have reason to

believe, that the offences for trial on this occasion, are rather less

than usual at this season, and, to whatever the diminution of crime

may be ascribed, I cannot forbear earnestly to press upon your

attention, a constant perseverance in two things, \_which, above all

others, are calculated to diminish crime\_,--the first is an unremitted

attention to the education of the children of the poor, and of all

classes of society, in the principles of true morality and sound

religion; the next is the constant and regular employment of such

persons as may be sentenced to imprisonment, in such labour as may be

adapted to their respective ages and conditions. I believe that these

observations may be considered as quite superfluous in this county,

and therefore I have taken the liberty of using the word perseverance,

because I believe your attention is already strongly drawn to that

subject, and it requires no exhortation of mine to induce your

attention to it. I am not quite sure whether in the gaol for this

city, the same means are provided for the employment of those persons

sentenced to terms of imprisonment, which are provided in the gaol

for the county. The magistrates for the city are equally desirous of

promoting the education of all the poor under their care, I have no

doubt; and I do hope and trust, if the means of labour have not been

provided in their gaol, that no time will be lost in providing those

means by which imprisonment may be made a real punishment, by which

offenders may be reformed during their imprisonment, and by which the

idle and dissolute may be prevented from any inclination to return

there."[A]

[Footnote A: From the time the judge referred to made the above

remarks, other judges, down to the present time, have added similar

sentiments. From 1823, until 1852, proof upon proof, has been added,

to show us the advantage of early training; and though much has been

cramming, and not training, still the results have been good. What

would they have been had the schooling given, really been \_training?\_

and what, if the training of children had been studied as \_art\_, if

the public looked on the teachers as artists, and treated them with

the consideration they deserve? Anticipations cannot be too sanguine

in estimating the results that must accrue to society from a system of

spiritual, intellectual, and moral culture, becoming universal, and

worked out by minds who will, I am sure hereafter, be able fully to

develope, from study, and practice of the \_art\_ of teaching, the great

principles of spiritual truths, intellectual vigour, and the moral

strength of the coming generations, which have been allowed to remain

in a state of torpor in the present.]

I have hitherto only being considering the \_prudential\_ motives which

should induce us to promote the education of the poor. I have shown,

that it will be for the benefit of society, inasmuch as it is likely

to decrease the number of those who transgress its laws--that it will

prove a greater security to our persons and property than laws or

prisons afford. But there are other motives which, if these selfish

ones were wholly wanting, might be sufficient to advocate, in every

humane heart, the same course of conduct. If the duty of promoting

honesty amongst the labouring classes did not exist, that of

increasing happiness and piety amongst them would not be the less

imperative. That there is much room for an augmentation of both, few,

I think, will be inclined to deny; the less so in proportion as

they have had the greater opportunity of ascertaining their actual

condition.

Let us now for a few moments consider how great a blessing an infant

school is, even when regarded as a mere asylum to take charge of the

child's bodily welfare. I have mentioned before, that the poor are

unable to take that care of their children which their tender age

requires, on account of their occupations; and have shewn, that it is

almost certain, that the children of such persons will learn every

species of vice. But there are other kinds of dangers which more

immediately affect the body, and are the cause of more accidents

than people in general imagine. I shall here notice some of the most

prominent, and hope to be able to convince the unprejudiced mind, that

it would be a charity to take charge of the infant poor, even leaving

the idea of their learning any thing good at school entirely out of

the question; and surely those persons, who disapprove of educating

the poor at all, will see the propriety of keeping, if possible, their

children safe from accidents, and preserving the lives of many little

ones, who would otherwise be lost to their country, from their falling

a prey to surrounding dangers.

It is well known that many poor people are obliged to live in garrets,

three or four stories high, with a family of six or seven children;

and it will not appear improbable that, when the children are left by

themselves, they should frequently meet with accidents by tumbling

down stairs; some breaking their backs, others their legs or arms;

and to this cause alone, perhaps, may be traced a vast number of the

cripples that daily appear as mendicants in our streets. When the

poor parents return from their daily labour, they sometimes have the

mortification of finding that one, or probably two, of their children,

are gone to an hospital; which of course makes them unhappy, and

unfits them for going through their daily labour. This dead weight,

which is continually on the minds of parents, is frequently the cause

of their being unable to please their employers, and the consequence

sometimes is, they are thrown out of work altogether; whereas, if

they were certain that their children were taken care of, they would

proceed with their daily labour cheerfully, and be enabled to give

more satisfaction to their employers than they otherwise can do.

Other parents I have known, who, when obliged to go out, have locked

their children in a room to prevent them from getting into the street,

or falling down stairs, and who have taken every precaution, as

they imagined, to protect their children; but the little creatures,

perhaps, after fretting and crying for hours at being thus confined,

have ventured to get up to the window, in order to see what was

passing in the street, when one, over-reaching itself, has fallen out

and been killed on the spot. A gentleman said, at a public meeting at

Exeter, when referring to this subject, "I have myself, twice in my

life, nearly occasioned the death of children. In one instance, a

child left to itself, ran out of the hedge by the road-side; I was

fortunately able to stop, and found the child, unconscious of its

escape, raising its hands to the reins of the horse. And on another

occasion, my horse threw a child down, and I had but just time to pull

up, and prevent the wheels from passing over the infant's head." And

it was stated in a Bristol paper, that in the short space of \_one

fortnight, seven\_ children were taken to the infirmary of that city so

dreadfully burnt that four of them died. Numerous cases of this kind

are to be found in the public prints, and hundreds of such accidents

occur which are not noticed in the papers at all. Many children,

again, strolling into the fields, fall into ponds and ditches, and

are drowned. So numerous, indeed, are the dangers which surround the

infant poor, as to make a forcible appeal to the hearts of the pious

and humane, and to call loudly on them to unite in rescuing this

hitherto neglected part of the rising generation from the evils to

which they are exposed.

It is much to be regretted that those persons who most need employment

should be the last to procure it; but such is the fact, for there

are so many obstacles thrown in the way of married persons, and

especially, those with a family, that many are tempted to deny that

they have any children, for fear they should lose their situations,

though it is certainly an additional stimulus to a servant to behave

orderly, when he knows that he has others to look to him for support.

Shall I close this appeal for the necessity of educating the infant

poor by another and weightier argument? They are \_responsible\_ and

\_immortal\_ beings. It may be thought that I should have given this

plea the precedence of every other. I did not, because I felt

more anxious to make good my ground with the prudent and the

philanthropic--to show them that self-interest and humanity demand our

exertions in this cause. I knew that when I came to urge such efforts

upon the attention of the Christian, I could not possibly fail. No one

who is a sincere follower of Him who said "Suffer little children to

come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom;" no one

who professes to abide by the maxims of Him whose commandment was,

"Love thy neighbour as thyself," can turn a deaf ear to the entreaties

of those who are necessitous and suffering. Thousands there are among

those of whom we have been speaking, who are brought up in as great

ignorance of God and religion, as though they had been born in a

country where the light of Revelation had never shone--where the glad

tidings of salvation have never been proclaimed. With examples of evil

continually before their eyes, both at home and abroad, we see and

hear its consequences daily in the wickedness with which our streets

abound, and in the lisped blasphemy and profanity of those who learn

to curse and swear before they can well walk.

Whilst I was at Lincoln, I was shocked beyond measure by the horrid

language of the boys; to such a pitch had the evil come, that the

magistrates were determined to fine all the men who were brought

before them for profane swearing; and I had the satisfaction of

hearing that four men had been fined whilst I was there. What a

blessing it would be if other magistrates throughout the kingdom would

follow their example!

Any person who has been accustomed to walk the streets of London, must

have heard how frequently children take the name of the Almighty in

vain; seldom or ever mentioning it but to confirm some oath. I have

seen boys playing at marbles, tops, and other games, and who, on

a dispute arising about some frivolous thing, would call upon the

Supreme Being to strike them deaf, dumb, or blind, nay, even dead,

if what they said were not true; when, nevertheless, I have been

satisfied from having observed the origin of the dispute, that the

party using the expressions has been telling a falsehood. Indeed so

common is this kind of language in the streets, that it often passes

without notice. I am inclined to think, that children accustomed to

use such expressions on every trifling occasion, will, when they grow

to riper years, pay very little respect to the sanctity of an oath. It

is, perhaps, one of the reasons why we hear of so much perjury in the

present day. At all events, little children cannot avoid hearing such

expressions, not only from those who are rather older than themselves,

but, I am sorry to say, even from their parents. I have known repeated

instances of this kind. Many little ones, when they first come to our

schools, make use of dreadful expressions, and when told that it is

wrong, will say that they did not know it was so; others, with the

greatest simplicity, have declared, that they had heard their fathers

or mothers say the same words. Hence I have had much difficulty in

persuading them that it was wrong, for they very naturally thought,

that if their parents made use of such language, they might do the

same. How great is the necessity of good example; and did parents

generally consider how apt children are to receive impressions, and to

become imitators, both in their words and actions, they would be more

cautious than they are. There are many parents who make use of very

bad expressions themselves, who would correct their children for using

the same;--as a proof of this, I will mention one circumstance, out of

many others, that took place in the school I superintended many years

since. We had a little girl there, five years old, who was so fond of

the school, that she frequently stopped after the usual hours to play

with my children and some others who chose to stay in the play-ground.

Many of them would stop till eight or nine o'clock at night, to which

I had no objection, provided their parents approved of it, and they

did not get into mischief; it being desirable to keep them out of the

streets as much as possible. It happened, however, one day, that some

of the children, offended this child, and she called them by dreadful

names, such as I cannot repeat; and, of course, the others were

terrified, and told me of them immediately. I was soon satisfied that

the child was ignorant of the meaning of what she said, for, as an

excuse for her conduct, she declared that she heard her father and

mother use the same words. I told the child, that notwithstanding her

parents might have done so, it was very wicked, and that I could not

let her stay another time to play, if ever she did so again. Having

sent for the mother, I informed her of the expressions the child had

used, but did not tell her what she had mentioned relative to her

parents, for if I had, she would have beaten her most unmercifully.

The mother, after having heard me relate the circumstance, immediately

flew into a passion with the child, and declared, that she would "skin

her alive," (this was her expression,) and I had much difficulty to

restrain her from correcting the child in the school. Having pacified

her a little, I inquired where the child could have heard such wicked

expressions. She said she could not tell. I then told her, I hoped the

child did not learn them of her, or her father. To this she made no

answer, but I could perceive that she stood self-convicted, and having

said what I conceived necessary upon the occasion, I dismissed her,

observing that it was useless for ladies and gentlemen to establish

schools for the education of the infant poor, if the parents did not

assist by setting them a good example.

I am happy to state, that the advice I gave her was not thrown away,

as I never knew the child guilty of saying a bad word afterwards; and

the mother soon brought me another child, of two years and a half old,

and said she should be very glad if I would take it into the school,

and that she wished a blessing might always attend the gentlemen

who supported the institution. She also requested me to take an

opportunity of speaking a few words to her husband, for she was

thankful for what had been said to her. And here I would observe, that

although it is most undoubtedly true, that the good taught to children

in our infant schools is greatly counteracted by the conduct they

witness on their return home, yet we occasionally see, that these

little children, by the blessing of God, are made the means of

reforming their own parents. What a gratifying fact it is, that the

adult and hardened sinner, may be turned from his evil ways--from

death unto life--by an infant's precept or example!

Nor is it only in profane expressions that we see the influence of

evil. Some children I have known, in the same neighbourhood, who even

beat their parents. There was a poor widow, very near the school, who

was frequently to be seen with her face dreadfully bruised by

blows from her own son. He had been taken before a magistrate, and

imprisoned for three months, but it did him no good, for he afterwards

beat his mother as much as ever, and the poor woman had it in

contemplation to get the miscreant sent out of the country. One

Sunday, I remember to have seen a boy, under twelve years of age, take

up a large stone to throw at his mother: he had done something wrong

in the house, and the mother followed him into the street with a small

cane, to correct him for it; but he told his mother, that if she dared

to approach him, he would knock her down. The mother retired, and

the boy went where he pleased. These and many similar scenes I have

witnessed; and I am afraid that many such characters have been so

completely formed as to be past reformation. So essential is it, to

embrace the first opportunity of impressing on the infant mind the

principles of duty and virtue.

I am aware that many excellent institutions are in existence for the

spread of the gospel amongst the ignorant and depraved at home as well

as abroad; but I must here again advert to the readier reception of

religious truths in infancy, than by the adult and confirmed sinner.

I would not say to those who are engaged in the painful task--painful

because so often unsuccessful--forego your labours; but I would call

upon all who have at heart the everlasting welfare of the souls of

men, to exert themselves, that the rising generation may not likewise

grow up into that state of perverseness--that they may not in future

years prove themselves to be a generation, which, "like the adder,

turneth a deaf ear to the charmer, charm he ever so wisely." I am

satisfied, from the experience I have had, that an amount of good

is attainable from early and judicious culture, which far, very far

surpasses all that has heretofore been accomplished; and on which not

a few are even unprepared to calculate.

It was a Christian-like wish expressed by King George III., that every

child in his dominions should be able to read the bible; and from the

increased facility of doing so from gratuitous education, the number

of those who cannot is much less than formerly; but in many cases the

necessitous circumstances of the parents prevent them from allowing

their children, except during their infant years, the advantage of

instruction, even though it cost them nothing. The time for the

children of the poor to receive instruction, is between the ages

of two and eight; after that period many are sent out to work, or

detained at home, for they then become useful to their parents, and

cannot be sent to school. There are many little girls who, having

left the infant school, go out to work for a shilling a week, and the

mothers have declared to me, when I have endeavoured to persuade them

to send them to the National School, for at least one year, that they

could not do it, for they were so poor, that every shilling was a

great help; they have, however, promised me that they would send them

to the Sunday school. This may account, in some measure, for there

being so many more boys than girls in almost every school in London,

and chews that great good has been done, and is doing, by those

valuable institutions.[A]

[Footnote A: It is to be observed here, that the children do not come

to or schools on Sundays, but many of them, between five and six years

old, who have brothers and sisters in the national school, go with

them to church, and others of the same age go to a Sunday school in

the neighbourhood. In short, I may venture to say, that almost all the

children that are able, go either to a Sunday school or to church: but

to take them all in a body, at the early age that they are admitted

into an infant school, to any place of worship, and to keep them there

for two or three hours, with a hope to profit them, and not to

disturb the congregation, is, according to my view, injurious if not

impracticable.]

Many of my readers, who have been in the habit of noticing and pitying

the poor, may think the detail into which I have entered superfluous,

but I can assure them the want of information on the subject is but

too general, and is sufficient to account for the indifference which

has so long been exhibited.

The objection, that education is altogether improper for poor people

is not quite obsolete. There are not wanting persons who still

entertain the most dreadful apprehensions of the \_"march of

intellect,"\_ as it has been termed; who see no alternative but that it

must over-turn every thing that is established, and subvert the whole

order of society. I would willingly impart comfort to the minds of

those who are afflicted with such nervous tremours, but I fear, if the

demonstration of experience has not quieted them, the voice of reason

never will. It cannot fail to remind us of the apprehensions of the

popish clergy in former times, who decried the art of printing,

then recently introduced, as a branch of the black art, which, if

encouraged, must eventually demolish the social fabric, and introduce

civil wars and discord into every country. Time, that test of truth,

has shewn us how groundless their apprehensions were. Instead of

injuring that fabric, it has strengthened its foundation so that it

cannot be shaken, and has surrounded it with defences, which bid

defiance to assaults.

Oh! that the time were come when every heart, being imbued with truly

christian principles, would see that the noblest and highest object

that could be set before us, would be to rear up the minds of the

young in knowledge, virtue, and piety; to train them to intelligence

and usefulness in this life, and for happiness and immortality in the

life to come. On such labours the blessing of God would inevitably

rest, and His promise of their success is positive and unconditional.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will

not depart from it."

To the furtherance of the infant system I have devoted for many years

my utmost energies and resources, and to it I purpose to give them, so

long as I am permitted by the gracious Providence of God. I shall be

happy to render it any aid, either by supplying information to those

who need it, or by personal exertions, the expenses of so doing

being defrayed; on application to my Publisher, 22, Portugal Street,

Lincoln's Inn, London, or to myself', at Moor Cottage, Wakefield.

In order to urge the necessity, and explain the design of infant

schools, I have for some years been accustomed to deliver a course of

lectures, of which the following is an outline:--

FIRST LECTURE.--Affecting state of the children of the

poor--Lamentable condition of young delinquents--What are the

causes?--The question answered--Bodily and mental injuries now

sustained by children of all ranks, described and prevented--What is

the best remedy for existing evils?--Answer given--Origin and history

of the Infant System--Its progress in Scotland, where it might least

have been expected--What are the objections to the system?--Practical

refutation of them--Modes of instruction: The alphabet, spelling,

reading, arithmetic--Moral cultivation enforced, and the means

explained.

SECOND LECTURE.--A play-ground made not only delightful, but \_mentally

and morally\_ improving--The class-room adapted to produce and confirm

religious impressions--Music, its application to improve the feelings

and memory--Representations of natural objects and scriptural

subjects--Variety and extent of information attainable--Lying,

dishonesty, injustice, and cruelty corrected.

THIRD LECTURE.--New plans of reward and punishment--Influence of fear

and love--Great difference in the result--Infant system more fully

explained--Appeals to conscience--Emulation unnecessary--Elliptical

plan of teaching described--Trials by jury--Effect of

sympathy--Infants the instruments of improving one another.

FOURTH LECTURE.--Methods of teaching the elements of grammar,

geography, and geometry--Gallery described, and its application to

many useful purposes--Qualifications of instructors--Injury sustained

from their deficiencies and errors--The system contrasted with former

methods--Ultimate effects of its diffusion--Servants prepared to

become blessings to families--Hints to parents, and the application of

the whole system to children of every grade.

These lectures I am ready to deliver wherever it may be deemed

desirable, and to follow up the effect by the organization of schools.

The necessary apparatus may be obtained of myself.

CHAPTER V.

PRINCIPLES OF INFANT EDUCATION.

\_Moral treatment--Importance of exercise--Play-ground

indispensable--The education of nature and human education should

be joined--Mental development, children should think for

themselves--Intellectual food adapted for children--A spirit

of inquiry should be excited--Gradual development of the young

mind--Neglect of moral treatment--Inefficacy of maxims learned by

wrote--Influence of love--The play-ground a field of observation--The

natural propensities there shew themselves--Respect of

private property inculcated--Force of conscience on the

alert--Anecdote--Advantages of a strict regard for truth--The simple

truths of the Bible fit for children\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The business of education, in respect of knowledge, is not, as I

think to perfect a learner in all or any one of the sciences, but to

give his mind that disposition, and those habits, that may enable

him to attain any part of knowledge he shall stand in need of in the

future coarse of his life."--\_Locke\_.

"When the obligations of morality are taught, let the sanctions of

Christianity, never be forgotten; by which it will be shewn not that

they give lustre and strength to each other: religion will appear to

be the voice of reason, and morality the will of God."--\_Johnson\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

When Agesilaus, king of Sparta, was asked, "What should boys be

taught?" he answered, "What they ought to do when they become

men." Such a declaration was worthy of later times, since the most

intelligent now admit that the great end of all education is the

formation of solid, useful, and virtuous character. This work should

be, doubtless, commenced at the earliest possible period, to it the

system explained in this volume is considered to be adapted, and the

principles on which it proceeds are now to be illustrated. And here it

ought to be particularly observed that nothing is admissible, except

what is appropriate to the state of infancy, calculated to exercise

the physical energies, and likely, by their invigoration, to lay the

basis of a sound and powerful intellect. And yet all this is too often

forgotten. Look at the infant, the very embodying of vivacity and

activity, and its confinement to a particular posture, or the

requirement of a peculiar expression of countenance, is manifestly

unnatural. An inactive and healthy child under six years of age is

never seen. Whatever compels it to be otherwise consequently produces

what is artificial in character. A parent or a teacher may keep his

children quiet, and in what he terms order; but it does not follow

that this is a good preparation for after years. On the contrary,

bondage may issue in excess. The feelings and propensities which,

instead of being corrected, are unduly restrained, will be manifested

in some other ways, and under less favourable circumstances, and

frequently the reaction will be violent in maturity. Hence the system

now recommended is expressly one for \_infants\_, adapted to them just

as they are, and wholly designed to repress what is evil, and to

cherish what is good.

Accordingly, the utmost attention is given to the cheerfulness

and happiness of those on whom it acts. Instruction in reading,

arithmetic, geometry, and various other things is made exceedingly

amusing; smiling countenances and sparkling eyes are observable all

around when it is communicated; and what was dull and soporific,

according to the old plan, is now insinuated so agreeably, that

the child, while literally at play, is acquiring a large amount of

valuable knowledge. At play he sees Nature's book, that world of

beauties: he loves to look into it, there is no flogging to induce

him to do it. All is enquiry and anxiety on his part. "What is this?"

"What is that?" "What is it for?" "How did it come?" With numerous

other questions of similar import. Oh, that we had teachers to teach

more out of this divine book! Oh, that we had a public who would

encourage and cherish them for so doing! What blessed results even

have I seen, by one's being able to answer such enquiries! The absurd

notion that children can only be taught in a room, must be exploded.

I have done more in one hour in the garden, in the lanes, and in the

fields, to cherish and satisfy the budding faculties of childhood,

than could have been done in a room for months. Oh, mankind have yet

something to learn about teaching children! See how they catch at

truths through the medium of living things! See how it germinates in

them, by so doing; the teacher may forget, they do not, this I have

proved hundreds of times. Music has proved a most important auxiliary

for this purpose, and a stranger would be astonished at the hilarity

and delight with which much is rehearsed, with a full perception

of its meaning, when in any other way it would be irksome and

unintelligible.

These attainments, moreover, are accompanied by various movements

and evolutions which exercise the limbs, the joints, the muscles; in

addition to which, set times are appointed every morning and afternoon

for its exclusive enjoyment.

The conduct of inferior animals, when young, shows the propriety of

giving exercise to children. Every other creature makes use of its

organs of motion as soon as possible, and many of them, when under no

necessity of moving in quest of food, cannot be restrained without

force. Such is the case with the calf, the lamb, and many more. If

these creatures were not permitted to frisk about at pleasure, they

would soon die, or become diseased. The same inclination appears very

early in the human species; but as they are not able to take exercise

themselves, it is the business of their parents and nurses to give it

them. This may be done in various ways, and the methods included

in the system are shewn in other parts of this work. It is to be

regretted that men should be so inattentive to this matter; their

negligence is one reason why females know so little of it. Women will

always be desirous to excel in such accomplishments as recommend

them to the other sex; but men generally avoid even the slightest

acquaintance with the affairs of the nursery, and many would reckon

it an affront were they supposed to know any thing of them. Not so,

however, with the kennel or the stables; a gentleman of the first

rank, who is not ashamed to give directions concerning the management

of his dogs or horses, would blush were he surprised in performing the

same office for that being who is to be the heir of his fortunes, and,

perhaps, the future hope of his country.

Arguments to show the importance of exercise, might be drawn from

every part of the animal economy. Without it, the circulation of the

blood cannot be properly carried on, nor the different secretions duly

performed; neither can the fluids be properly prepared, nor the solids

rendered firm or strong. The action of the heart, the motion of the

lungs, and all the vital functions, are greatly assisted by exercise.

But to point out the manner in which these effects are produced, would

lead us beyond the present subject. We shall, therefore, only add,

that when exercise is neglected, none of the animal functions can be

duly performed; and when this is the case, the whole constitution must

go to wreck. Healthy parents, wholesome food, and suitable clothing

will avail little where it is disregarded. Sufficient exercise will

supply many defects in nursing, but nothing can compensate for its

want. A good constitution ought certainly to be our first object in

the management of children. It lays a foundation for their being

useful and happy in life; and whoever neglects it, not only fails in

his duty to his offspring, but to society.

While this is forgotten, let us not complain of weak and thoughtless

children, or of weak and thoughtless servants; for the former are so

from the neglect of their parents and the public; and the latter from

not having been taught to think at all--and yet the very persons that

object to the education of the poor are the first to complain of their

servants.

A notion that habits of industry must be established, has, however,

been the means, I regret to state, of a sad perversion of the system

in these respects. The time allowed for amusement and exercise has

been in some cases, very much abridged that the children might learn

and practise sewing, knitting, plaiting, &c. Now, no one can be more

disposed to the encouragement of industrious habits than myself, but I

would say not at the expense of health; which I am certain, in these

cases it must be. Deprive the children of their amusement, and they

will soon cease to be the lively, happy beings, we have hitherto seen

them, and will become the sickly, inanimate creatures, we have been

accustomed to behold and pity, under the confinement and restraint

of the dame's schools. I do not scruple to affirm, that if the

\_play-grounds\_ of infant schools are cut off from the system,--they

will from that moment cease to be a blessing to the country.

Nothing has given me greater pain than to witness the thorough neglect

of play-ground attendance on the part of teachers and the public;

the former leave the children to themselves at the very time their

attendance is most desirable; and when, if duly watched, the children

will give them \_lessons\_. Yes! such lessons as no book can give, and

such lessons as every efficient teacher \_must\_ learn, or efficiency

is out of the question. The public are too fond of hearing tasks and

memory work, and such book-learning as is taught in school, with the

singing, and the amusing indoor work, to the detriment and neglect

of the moral and physical outdoor work. Again and again, I say, the

outdoor training tells most upon the morals and the formation of

character.

The first faculties which develop themselves in childhood, are those

of observation. The infant, who is two months old, will notice a

lighted candle; immediately that sense is gratified, it seeks to

please another, that of \_touch\_, and every mother knows, if not

prevented, it will put its hand in the flame. The next effort is to

examine other objects: these it will seize if it can, and after having

examined one, it will put it aside to observe another. On its being

able to move about, it seeks objects within its reach, and wishing to

gratify the sense of taste, applies every thing to the mouth; by this

it distinguishes the bitter from the sweet, and on seeing what is

sweet a second time, will point to it and wish to obtain it, whilst

what is bitter will not be desired.

The \_mental\_ part of the system should now be adverted to. Hence it

has been well remarked, "From the time that children begin to use

their hands, nature directs them to handle every thing over and

over, to look at it while they handle it, and to put it into various

positions, and at various distances from the eye. We are apt to excuse

this as a childish diversion, because they must be doing something,

and have not reason to entertain themselves in a more manly way. But

if we think more justly, we shall find that they are engaged in the

most serious and important study; and if they had all the reason of a

philosopher, they could not be more properly employed. For it is this

childish employment that enables them to make the proper use of their

eyes. They are thereby every day acquiring habits of perception,

which are of greater importance than any thing we can teach them. The

original perceptions which nature gave them are few, and insufficient

for the purposes of life; and, therefore, she made them capable of

many more perceptions by habit. And to complete her work, she has

given them an unwearied assiduity in applying to the exercise by which

those perceptions are acquired."

Such is the education which nature gives her children, and we may add

that another part of her discipline is, that by the course of things,

children must exert all their muscular force, and employ all their

ingenuity, in order to gratify their curiosity and satisfy their

little appetites. What they desire is only to be obtained at the cost

of labour, patience, and many disappointments. By the exercise of the

body and mind necessary for satisfying their desires, they acquire

agility, strength, and dexterity in their motions, as well as

constitutional health and vigour; they learn to bear pain without

dejection, and disappointment without despondency. The education of

nature is most perfect in savages, who have no other tutor; and we see

that in the quickness of all their senses, in the agility of their

motions, in the hardiness of their constitutions, and in their ability

to bear hunger, thirst, pain, and disappointment, they commonly far

exceed civilized nations. On this account, a most ingenious writer

seems to prefer savage to social life. But it is the intention of

nature, that human education should assist to form the man, and she

has fitted us for it, by the natural principles of imitation and

belief, which discover themselves almost in infancy, as well as by

others which are of later growth.

When the education which we receive from men does not give scope to

that of nature, it is erroneous in its means and its tendency, and

enervates both the body and the mind. Nature has her way of rearing

men, as she has of healing their maladies. The art of education is to

follow her dictates, and the art of education is equally to obey her

laws. The ancient inhabitants of the Baleares followed nature in their

manner of teaching their children to be good archers, when they hung

their dinner aloft by a thread, and left them to bring it down: by

their skill in the use of the bow.

The education of nature, without any more human care than is necessary

to preserve life, makes a savage. Human education joined to that of

nature, may make a good citizen, a skilful artizan, or a well-bred

man; but a higher power is wanting in order to produce a Bacon or a

Newton.

The error of the \_past\_ system (for such I hope I may venture to call

it) as to \_mental development\_ was, that the inferior powers of the

mind were called into activity, in preference to its higher faculties.

The effort was to exercise the memory, and store it with information,

which, owing to the inactivity of the understanding and the judgment,

was seldom or never of use. To adopt the opinions of others was

thought quite enough, without the child being troubled to think for

itself, and to form an opinion of its own. But this is not as it

should be. Such a system is neither likely to produce great nor wise

men; and is much better adapted to parrots than children. Hence, the

first thing attempted in an infant school is, to set the children

thinking,--to induce them to examine, compare, and judge, in reference

to all those matters which their dawning intellects are capable of

mastering. It is of no use to tell a child, in the first place, \_what

it should think\_,--this is at once inducing mental indolence, which

is but too generally prevalent among adults; owing to this erroneous

method having been adopted by those who had the charge of their early

years. Were a child left to its own resources, to discover and judge

of things exclusively by itself, though the opposite evil would be

the consequence, namely, a state of comparative ignorance, yet I am

doubtful whether it would be greater or more lamentable than that

issuing from the injudicious system of giving children dogmas instead

of problems, the opinions of others instead of eliciting their own. In

the one case we should find a mind, uninformed and uncultivated, but

of a vigorous and masculine character, grasping the little knowledge

it possessed, with the power and right of a conqueror; in the other,

a memory occupied by a useless heap of notions,--without a single

opinion or idea it could call its own,--and an understanding indolent

and narrow, and, from long-indulged inactivity, almost incapable

of exertion. As the fundamental principle of the system, I would

therefore say, let the \_children think for themselves\_. If they arrive

at erroneous conclusions, assist them in attaining the truth; but

let them, with such assistance, arrive at it by their own exertions.

Little good will be done, if you say to a child,--\_That\_ is wrong,

\_this\_ is right, unless you enable it to perceive the error of the

one and the truth of the other. It is not only due to the child as a

rational being that you should act so, but it is essentially necessary

to the development of its intellectual faculties. It were not more

ridiculous for a master, in teaching arithmetic, to give his pupil the

problem and answer, without instructing him in the method of working

the question, than it is for a person to give a child results of

reasoning, without showing how the truth is arrived at. But some,

perhaps, will be ready to exclaim, "Surely the teacher should not

withhold the benefit of his knowledge and experience,--the child will

have time enough to examine the merits of his information when he

grows older and be more competent to do so!" To this I answer: in the

first place, nothing should be submitted to the child which it is not

fully competent to understand. To give the child tasks or subjects

too difficult for its mental powers, is a violation of nature; and as

foolish and detrimental as though you were to place a hundred pounds

weight on its shoulders when it is incapable of supporting ten. The

teacher's experience can only be of service to the child so far as it

is applicable to its own state; and as to postponing the period when

it is to think for itself, there is certainly no occasion for it.

Nature has provided food adapted to the powers of the infant's

stomach, and those who would rightly conduct the work of education,

should imitate her in providing its intellectual food. That this may

be done, I am attempting to shew in theory in the pages of this work;

and, that it answers equally well in practice, any one who has a

doubt, may assure himself by visiting any school conducted upon the

plan here laid down.

The charge has been brought against the system, that we are not

sufficiently anxious to teach the children to read. Now, though I may

venture to say, that under no other plan, do the children acquire a

knowledge of alphabetical characters, and the formation of words, so

soon as under the present, yet I am quite ready to concede that

I consider their learning to read a secondary object, to that of

teaching them to examine and find out the nature and properties of

things, of which words are but the \_signs\_. It is with \_things\_, and

not \_words\_ merely, we wish to make our children acquainted. If they

first learn the nature and properties of an object, there is no fear

of their afterwards inquiring its name; but we too frequently find,

that having acquired \_names\_, they are indifferent to, and forgetful

of, the objects represented.

Let children see and observe an object, and be taught the name of it

at the same time, and then both are indelibly fixed on the memory.

An infant at home is perpetually running around and looking at all

things, and hearing persons speaking about them; it soon becomes

acquainted with their names and properties, and then from time to time

speaks about them. "Ah!" exclaims papa or mama, "What an old-fashioned

child that is; one would wonder where it got such notions." A little

thought and reflection would soon tell where, and this thought

properly carried out would display an important fundamental principle

in teaching the young mind.

Our first endeavour is, therefore, to excite a spirit of inquiry,--to

foster that curiosity which is so natural to young children: till this

is properly done, your information will not be well received, and

it is most likely soon to be forgotten; but having once made them

inquisitive, you are more likely to tire of communicating than they

are of receiving. The skilful teacher will, indeed, rather leave them

with an appetite still craving, than satiate them by repletion. I have

frequently found the most beneficial results arise from the sudden

cessation of a lesson or a lecture on an interesting topic. The

children have looked for its renewal with the utmost impatience,

pondering over what they had already heard, and anticipating what was

yet to come with the greatest interest. Give a child a \_task\_, and

you impose a burthen on him,--permit him to learn something, and you

confer a favour.

Having excited a spirit of inquiry, the next endeavour is to direct it

to proper objects. These, of course, will be things which relate to

the senses of the child; the nature and properties of bodies, which

may be ascertained by the application of those senses, &c. Having

induced it to examine for itself, you are now to elicit its ideas of

each object respectively; and having taught it to use its reason

and judgment freely, and to express its own notions fearlessly and

candidly,--you are to attempt the correction of what is erroneous, by

putting forth your own views in as simple a way as possible: not so as

to induce the child to give up its own opinions and adopt yours, but

in such a way as to direct it to the attainment of truth; to induce a

comparison between its thoughts and yours, and thus to discover its

own error.

The powers of observation will speedily be improved under such a

course of instruction, and in all the subsequent stages of existence,

will not fail to constitute an independent and shrewd observer. But

some may think we are straining the child's faculties by the plan

recommended,--overstepping nature's laws,--and that the result must be

detrimental to the child, both in mind and body. So far, however, is

this from being true, that we have taken nature for our guide. We

deprecate strongly, most strongly, that unnatural system, which

gives children tasks so far beyond their powers, and for which their

infantile faculties are not qualified;--we would lead them on in the

path which nature has marked out--step by step--taking care that one

thing should be thoroughly mastered before another is attempted.

The mental powers of children are far stronger than is generally

supposed. No one who looks back to his early childhood, can fail of

recollecting, that, at times, his thoughts would even then reach

the very limits of human thought. All the powers of mind that are

exercised in after-life display themselves in infancy, and therefore

they all ought to be quietly and easily brought into exercise. This

maybe done by any object,--even a toy. Were we to tie up several of

our members so as to prevent their use, and at the same time exercise

strongly those at liberty, bodily distortion must result. If we, in

teaching, exercise the memory alone, and that merely with a knowledge

of words and not of things, an absolute mental distortion must result,

and the higher powers of reflection, judgment, and reason will remain

weak, feeble, and deficient from want of exercise. When all the powers

of the mind are brought out into harmonious action, the acquirement

of knowledge be comes pleasurable. Knowledge is the proper aliment to

expand and enlarge the mind, as natural food is for the growth of

the body; and when such as is proper to the age and character of the

recipient is selected, the one will be received with as much pleasure

as the other. As the due exercise of every bodily power causes it to

become strong, healthy, and vigorous, so the right and proper use of

every mental faculty will, in the end, occasion it to become active,

free, and powerful.

As soon as the child enters the school he is under command. He is

required to occupy certain places, to go through various motions, and

to attend to diversified instruction, at the sound of a foot, or the

raising of a hand. From this course no departure is allowed. At first

it is the work of sympathy and imitation, but afterwards it becomes a

matter of principle. Thus, then, the native reluctance of the infant

mind to obey, is overcome, and a solid basis laid for future efforts.

So far, however, the discipline is general; to be particular, the

individual character must be minutely observed. The movements of the

child, when unrestrained, must be diligently watched, its predominant

qualities ascertained, and such a mode of treatment adopted as sound

judgment of character may dictate. Wherever this is forgotten, some

evils will arise. The orders which are given to any other power than

those of sympathy and imitation, are not likely to be obeyed by the

untrained babe; the fact is, that as yet it has no other means of

obedience, and for this on higher principles we must wait till nature

furnishes instruments and opportunities for their exercise. When,

however, success is gained thus far, the way is prepared for

further development and culture, and the powers of observation and

discrimination, then gradually tasked, will accomplish all that is

desired. Thus the infant sits or rises, repeats or is silent, at

first, because those about him do so; afterwards he perceives a reason

for doing so: for example, that, when in the gallery, he can see

what he could not any where else, and, therefore, that he must march

thither, and then he judges that one thing is wrong because the doing

it was forbidden, and that another is right because it was commanded,

or because the one makes him happy and the other the contrary.

Under the old system of education, I must candidly say, \_moral\_

treatment has been often altogether omitted, and still more frequently

has it been erroneous, and consequently inefficient. Let me

ask,--would it promote a child's health to teach it to repeat certain

maxims on the benefits resulting from exercise? The answer is obvious.

Neither can it be of any service to the moral health of the child, to

teach it to repeat the best maxims of virtue, unless we have taken

care to urge the practical observance of those precepts. And yet this

has rarely been the case. How frequently do we hear persons remark

on the ill conduct of children, "It is surprising they should do

so;--they have been taught better things!" Very likely; and they may

have all the golden rules of virtue alluded to, carefully stored up in

their memories; but they are like the hoarded treasures of the miser,

the disposition to use them is wanted. It is this which we must strive

to produce and promote in the child. Indeed, if we can but be the

instruments of exciting a love of goodness, it will not err, nor lack

the knowledge how to do good, even though we were to forget to give it

any rules or maxims. It is to the heart we must turn our attention in

the moral treatment of children. We must carefully endeavour to elicit

and train out the moral feelings implanted within; and to awaken the

conscience to the approval of good, and the dislike and detestation

of evil. Another grand object of the master or mistress of an infant

school, is, therefore, to win their love, by banishing all slavish

fear. They are to be invited to regard their teacher, as one who

is desirous of promoting their happiness, by the most affectionate

means--not only by kind words, but by kind actions; one of which

influences a child more than a volume of words. Words appeal only to

the understanding, and frequently pass away as empty sounds; but kind

actions operate on the heart, and, like the genial light and warmth of

spring, that dispels the gloom which has covered the face of nature

during the chilly season of winter, they disperse the mists which

cold and severe treatment has engendered in the moral atmosphere.

The fundamental principle of the infant school system is \_love\_;

nor should any other be substituted for it, except when absolutely

necessary. Let the children see that you love them, and \_love\_ will

beget love, both toward their teacher and each other. Without the aid

of example nothing can be done; it is by this magnetic power alone

that sympathetic feelings can be awakened. It acts as a talisman on

the inmost feelings of the soul, and excites them to activity; which

should be the constant aim of all persons engaged in the important

work of education. As we find that vicious principles are strengthened

by habit, and good principles proportionally weakened, so, on the

contrary, immoral dispositions are weakened by the better feelings

being brought into action.

The great defect in the human character is \_selfishness\_, and to

remove or lessen this is the great desideratum of moral culture. How

happy were mankind, if, instead of each one living for himself, they

lived really for one another! The perfection of moral excellence

cannot be better described than as the attainment of that state in

which we should "love our neighbour as ourselves." The prevalence of

self-love will be very obvious to the observant master or mistress, in

the conduct of the children under their care, and it is this feeling

that they must be ever striving to check or eradicate. Nor need they

despair of meeting with some degree of success. The children may be

brought to feel, that to impart happiness is to receive it,--that

being kind to their little schoolfellows, they not only secure a

return of kindness, but actually receive a personal gratification from

so doing; and that there is more pleasure in forgiving an injury than

in resenting it. Some I know will be apt to say,--that after all, thus

is nothing but \_selfishness\_ or \_self-love\_. It is an old matter of

dispute, and I leave those to quarrel over it who please. Every

one knows and feels the difference between that which we call

\_selfishness\_, and that which is comprehensively termed by the lips

of divine truth, the "\_love of our neighbour\_." If it must be called

self-love, I can only say that it is the proper direction of the

feeling which is to be sought.

In the work of moral culture, it will be necessary not only to observe

the child's conduct under the restraint of school observation and

discipline; but at those times when it thinks itself at liberty to

indulge its feelings unnoticed. The evil propensities of our nature

have all the wiliness of the serpent, and lurk in their secret places,

watching for a favourable opportunity of exercise and display. For the

purpose of observation, the \_play-ground\_ will afford every facility,

and is on this account, as well as because it affords exercise and

amusement to the children, an indispensable appendage to an Infant

School. Here the child will show its character in its true light. Here

may be seen what effects the education of children has produced;

for if they are fond of fighting and quarrelling, here it will be

apparent; if they are artful, here they will seek to practice their

cunning; and this will give the master an opportunity of applying the

proper remedy; whereas, if they are kept in school (which they must

be, if there be no play-ground), these evil inclinations will not

manifest themselves until they go into the street, and consequently,

the antidote will not be applied. I have seen many children behave

very orderly in the school, but the moment they entered the

play-ground they manifested their selfishness to such a degree, that

they would wish all the rest of the children to be subservient to

them; and, on their refusing to let them bear rule, they would begin

to use force, in order to compel their compliance. This is conduct

that ought to be checked,--and what time so proper as the first stages

of infancy?

To take another case, a quarrel like this may arise: a boy has

six gooseberries; another boy comes and asks for one; by a little

solicitation he obtains it:--he wishes another;--but the boy who has

them says he cannot spare any more; he has only five, and cannot part

with another. The second boy, however, duns him. He even acts the

hypocrite, and puts into play many of the worst artifices of human

nature, which we so often see in daily practice, and he gains his

end. But he is not yet satisfied; he wishes another. The first boy,

however, will on no account give him more. He again tries all his

arts, but in vain. Seeing he cannot by art or entreaty gain another,

he has recourse to violence. He snatches one out of his companion's

hand and runs off with it. The first boy is irritated at such conduct,

he pursues the fugitive, overtakes him, and gives him a blow on the

face. The second boy is as great a coward as he is a thief. He comes

up and makes his complaint to the master. The master then has a trial

by jury. He does not knock one head against the other according to the

old custom, but he hears both plaintiff and defendant, and having got

the facts, he submits to the children themselves whether it was right

in the one boy to take with violence What was not his own, and shews

them which is the more to blame. Then they decide on the sentence;

perhaps some one suggests that it should be the utmost infliction

allowable, a slight pat on the hand; while a tender-hearted girl says,

"Please, sir, give it him very softly;" but the issue is, a marked

distinction between right and wrong;--appropriate expressions of

pleasure and disapprobation:--and on the spot, "a kissing and being

friends." I am, indeed, so firmly convinced, from the experience I

have had, of the utility of a play-ground, from the above reasons,

and others, elsewhere mentioned, that I scruple not to say, an infant

school is of little, if any, service without one.

Where the play-ground is ornamented with flowers, fruit-trees, &c.

(and I would recommend this plan to be invariably adopted,) it

not only affords the teacher an opportunity of communicating much

knowledge to the children, and of tracing every thing up to the Great

First Cause, but it becomes the means of establishing principles of

honesty. They should not on any account be allowed to pluck the fruit

or flowers; every thing should be considered as sacred; and being

thus early accustomed to honesty, temptations in after-life will be

deprived of their power. It is distressing to all lovers of children,

to see what havoc is made by them in plantations near London; and even

grown persons are not entirely free from this fault, for, not content

with a proper foot-path, they must walk on a man's plantations, pull

up that which can be of no use, and thereby injure the property of

their neighbour. These things ought not to be, nor do I think they

would be so common, if they were noticed a little more in the

education of children. It has been too much the practice with many,

to consider that the business of a school consists merely in teaching

children their letters; but I am of opinion, that the formation of

character while there, is of the greatest importance, not only to the

children, but to society at large. How can we account for the strict

honesty of the Laplanders, who can leave their property in the woods,

and in their huts, without the least fear of its being stolen or

injured, while we, with ten times the advantages, cannot consider our

property safe, with the aid of locks and bolts, brick walls, and even

watchmen and police-officers besides? There must be some cause for all

this, and perhaps the principal one is defective education, and the

total neglect of the morals of the infant poor, at a time when their

first impressions should be taken especial care of; \_for conscience,

if not lulled to sleep, but called into vigorous action, will prove

stronger than brick walls, bolts, or locks; and I am satisfied, that I

could have taken the whole of the children under my care in the first

infants' school, into any gentleman's plantation, without their doing

the least injury whatever; and this I could now do in any similar

circumstances\_. I will mention, however, one fact.

One day, while I was walking in the play-ground, I saw at one end of

it about twenty children, apparently arguing a subject, \_pro\_ and

\_con\_; from the attitude of several of the orators, I judged it was

about something that appeared to them of considerable importance. I

wished to know the subject of debate, but was satisfied that if I

approached the children it might put an end to the matter altogether.

Some of the bystanders saw me looking very attentively at the

principal actor, and, as I suppose, suggested to the party the

propriety of retiring to some other spot, for immediately afterwards

they all went behind a partition, which afforded me an opportunity of

distinctly hearing all that passed, without being observed by them. I

soon found that the subject of debate was a \_song\_. It seems that one

of the children had brought a song to the school, which some of the

monitors had read, and having decided that it was an improper thing

for the child to have in his possession, one of them had taken it from

the owner, and destroyed it. The aggrieved party had complained to

some of the other children, who said that it was \_thieving\_ for one

child to take any thing from another child, without his consent. The

boy, nettled at being called a thief, defended himself, by saying that

he, as a monitor, had a right to take away from any of his class any

thing that was calculated to do them harm; and was, it seems, backed

in this opinion by many others. On the other hand, it was contended

that no such right existed; and it was doubtful to me for a

considerable time, on which side the strength of the argument lay.

At last one of the children observed to the following effect:--"You

should have taken it to \_master\_, because he would know if it was bad

better than you." This was a convincing argument, and to my great

delight, the boy replied--"How much did the song cost?" The reply was,

"A half-penny." "Here, then, take it," says the child, "I had one

given me to-day; so now remember I have paid you for it, but if you

bring any more songs to school I will tell master." This seemed

to give general satisfaction to the whole party, who immediately

dispersed to their several amusements. A struggle like this, between

the principles of \_duty and honesty\_, among children so very young,

must prove highly interesting to all who love them, and exemplifies,

beyond a doubt, the immense advantage of early instruction.

Another thing to be noticed is, a regard for \_truth\_. Nothing is so

delightful as this. There is no conversation so agreeable as that of

the man of integrity, who hears without any design to betray, and

speaks without any intention to deceive; and this admitted, we should

strive to the utmost to induce children to remember it. But our

success, in a great measure, will depend on the means we employ. Many

children are frightened into falsehood by the injudicious methods of

those who have the care of them. I have known a mother promise a child

forgiveness if it would speak the truth, and, after having obtained

confession, she has broken her engagement. A child, once treated in

this manner, will naturally be guarded against a similar deception.

I have known others who would pretend not to punish the child for

confession, but for first denying it, and afterwards confessing. I

think that children should not be punished, on any account, after

having been promised forgiveness, truth being of too great importance

to be thus trifled with; and we cannot wonder if it is lightly

esteemed by children, after the example is set by their parents.

Having had several thousand children under my care, I have had

favourable opportunities of observing the bias of the infant mind,

and I must say, that I have not found them so inclined to evil and

falsehood as I had previously imagined.

When morality is adverted to in this volume, let it never be

forgotten, that by it is meant the pure and perfect morality of

the sacred Scriptures. From this source alone the great truths and

precepts can be derived, for regulating the conscience and improving

the heart. The infant system, however, would aim to steer perfectly

clear of the more remote theological opinions entertained by

Christians of different denominations. With these, little children can

have nothing to do, and institutions for their express benefit should

receive the support of all. What kind of religious doctrine and faith

infants ought to be taught, I will not here determine, but leave it

for consideration in a future chapter devoted more expressly to that

subject. It must be the wish of all true Christians that they should

be taught the fundamental truths of the everlasting Gospel. But it is

much to be lamented that what are the fundamental truths of the gospel

is so frequently a debatable point. With such controversial topics

infants have nothing to do, and to teach such matters would rather be

sowing seeds for future scepticism than laying a solid basis for

pure and undefiled religion. In all things, but more especially in

religion, as being the subject of the highest importance, the purest,

simplest, and most unadulterated truths should be taught. The Bible

contains ample and abundant stores of such simple truth, most

admirably suited to infant capacity in texts, precepts, parables, and

histories. The pious and judicious mother or teacher can be at no loss

for a proper selection. Many beautiful and simple prayers are to be

found in the Church of England Prayer-Book, which I think cannot be

mended, and which I have found quite suitable to the infant mind.

Several of the Collects, for simplicity of language and rich fulness

of divine truth, cannot be surpassed. Simple hymns for instruction and

devotion are also requisite, and I have endeavoured to provide such as

these in a \_Manual\_, recently published in connexion with a friend,

and which may be bad through the publisher of this work.

CHAPTER VI.

REQUISITES FOR AN INFANT SCHOOL.

\_The master and mistress should reside on the premises--Interior

arrangements--A school and its furniture--Lesson-posts and

lessons--The younger children should not be separated from the

older--Play-ground arrangements--Rotatory swing--Its management and

advantages\_.

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"Wisdom seeks the most desirable ends in the use of the most

appropriate means."

\* \* \* \* \*

I shall now lay before my readers an account of the things necessary

for the establishment of an infant school; previously to presenting

them with the detail of the plan to be pursued in it.

In the first place, it is necessary to provide an airy and spacious

apartment, with a dry, and, if possible, a large play-ground attached

to it. The plot of ground, I conceive, should not be less than 50 feet

wide, and 100 feet long; but if the ground were 150, or 200 feet long,

it would be so much the better, as this would allow 100 or 150 feet

for a play-ground; which is of such importance, that I consider the

system would be very defective without it, for reasons which will be

spoken of hereafter.

There should likewise be a room about fifteen feet square, for the

purpose of teaching the children in classes, which may be formed at

one end of the large room: this is absolutely necessary. As the master

and mistress should live on the premises, a small house, containing

three or four rooms, should be provided for them. The reason for their

living on the premises is, that the children should be allowed to

bring their dinners with them, as this will keep them out of the

streets; and, indeed, of those who do go home to dinner, many will

return in a very short time; and if there be no person on the premises

to take care of them, they will be lost; and not only so, but strange

boys will come in from the streets, and do a great deal of mischief,

if no one be there to prevent it.

The portion of sitting-room that I have allowed for each child is

twelve inches. The scholars should sit all round the school room, with

their backs against the wall; double seats should be round the sides

of the school, like the two first seats in the gallery. A school

according to the engraved plan, will be found large enough for all

the purposes of an infant school; but if it is wished to be more

commodious, it may be of the same length as the plan, and instead of

twenty-two feet, may be made thirty feet wide; this will hold as many

children as ought to be collected together in one place, and as many

as any man and woman can possibly do justice to if it be any longer,

it will be difficult for all the children to hear the master. An

oblong building is the cheapest, on account of the roof. Economy has

been studied in the plan given, without any thing being added that is

unnecessary. This, of course, is a matter of opinion, and may be acted

upon or not, just as it suits those who may choose to build. The

master's house in the plan, it will be seen, projects a little into

the play-ground, to afford him the opportunity of seeing the children

at play while he is at dinner, that he may notice any improper conduct

on the part of the children, and mention it when the accounts of the

day are made up.

As children are very apt to get into danger, even when at school,

it becomes expedient to exercise the utmost vigilance, in order to

prevent the possibility of accident; for where two hundred children

are assembled together, the eldest not seven years of age, it is most

certain that if there be danger, some will get into. For this reason,

all the doors on the premises should be so secured, that the children

cannot swing them backwards and forwards; if they are not, they will

get their fingers pinched, or greater accidents may occur. The forms

also should be so placed that the children may not be likely to fall

over them. Every thing, in short, should be put out of the way, that

will be likely to occasion any danger. The seats should not be more

than nine inches high; and for the smaller children six inches; and

should be eleven or twelve inches wide; and fixed all round to the

walls.

The master's desk should be placed at the end of the school, where the

class-room is. By this means he will be able to see the faces of all

the children, and they can see him, which is absolutely necessary.

They may then be governed by a motion of his hand.

The \_furniture\_ necessary for the school consists of a desk for

the master; seats for the children; lesson-stands; stools for the

monitors; slates and pencils; pictures and lessons on scriptural

subjects; pictures and lessons on natural history; alphabets and

spelling lessons; brass letters and figures, with boards for

them; geometrical figures, &c.; and the transposition-frame, or

arithmeticon, as it has been called. To these may added little

books, &c. The particular use of these articles will be shewn in the

succeeding pages.

The following is a representation of a lesson-post.

The \_lessons\_, pasted on wood, to render them sufficiently stiff, are

put into the grooves of the lesson-post; and can then be placed in any

position which is most convenient, and adjusted to any height, as the

master may see proper.

[Illustration: \_a b\_, is a slip of wood with a groove in it, fixed to

the post by means of the screws \_c\_ and \_d\_, on which slip are two

blocks \_e\_ and \_f\_; the bottom one, \_f\_, is fixed with a groove in

the upper side, for the lower edge of the board \_g h\_ to rest in; the

upper block, \_e\_, has a groove in the lower side, for the upper edge

of the board \_g h\_ to rest in, and rises and falls according to the

width of the board on the slip \_a b\_.--Instead of being made with

feet, the lesson post is generally, and perhaps better, fixed into

the floor of the school-room, and should be very slight, and 4 feet 4

inches in height.]

The following lesson-post has been found to answer better than the

preceding one; and is fixed in a socket, which prevents the necessity

of the cross-bar feet at bottom, and possesses this advantage, that it

may be taken out when done with, and hung up by the side of the

wall, so as to allow the area of the room to be quite clear of any

incumbrance, and to be used for any other purpose. No. 2, is the

socket which should be let into the floor and screwed fast to the side

of a joist, so as to keep it perfectly steady; the socket is to be

open at bottom so as to let the dust pass through: and No. 1, is a

plate, to fit over the socket, to come flush with the floor, to be put

over it when the lesson-post is taken out, to prevent too much dust

from getting into the socket. The little nich represented in plate

one, is too small for the pupils to get their fingers into, so as to

pull up the plate, but wide enough to allow the teacher to put a

very narrow key in, when he desires to pull up the plate to put the

lesson-post in the socket. No. 3, is a front view of the lesson-post,

containing the slides nipping the lessons between them; the other

figure represents a side view of the lesson post, and the small figure

at the left hand side represents the groove of the two sliders to

receive the lesson, and the back part of it the dovetails to clip,

which come down behind the post; these are placed parallel in double

rows down the school, at equal distances, exactly opposite each other;

and flattened brass or iron is to be let into the floor, opposite to

the front of them, as shewn in one of the engravings representing the

area of the school, and the children at their object lessons. I have

found by experience that this invention possesses a decided advantage

over the other, as they always remain perpendicular and parallel to

each other, take up less room, and are more easily put out of the way,

and the children cannot knock them down; they should be numbered in

front as represented in the figure, so that the teacher may always put

the proper post in its own place.

[Illustration]

The Arithmeticon, of which a description will be given in a subsequent

chapter, is simple in its construction, but, as will be seen

hereafter, may be variously and beneficially applied. It is indeed

indispensable in an infant school, as it is useful for teaching the

first principles of grammar, arithmetic, and geometry. The expense of

furnishing a large school is about £16.; that of a smaller one about

£10.

I must here protest against a violation of the freedom of the infant

mind. A fold, as it is called, is erected in some schools for the

youngest of the children; and thus they are cut off from the society

of the rest, from whom they would learn much more than they could from

any teacher. The monitors having charge of this class, are also cooped

up in the same cage, and therefore suffer the same privation. The

result of my own experience, as well as that of others, is, that a

child is decidedly incompetent to the duties of a monitor, if he

cannot keep the youngest class in order without any such means. I

would therefore deprecate, in the strongest terms, the separation

referred to, as not only altogether unnecessary, but exceedingly

injurious.

To have one hundred children, or upwards, in a room, however

convenient in other respects, and not to allow the children proper

relaxation and exercise, which they could not have without a

play-ground, would materially injure their health, which is a thing,

in my humble opinion, of the first importance. I would rather see a

school where they charged two-pence or three-pence per week for each

child, having a play-ground, than one where the children had free

admission without one; for I think the former institution would do the

most good. The play ground, likewise, is one of the most useful

parts of the system. It is there the child shews itself in its true

character, and thereby gives the master an opportunity of nipping

in the bud its evil propensities. I am, therefore, most anxious to

recommend that this necessary appendage to an infant school should

not be dispensed with. I moreover observe, that where there is a

play-ground attached to the school, instead of playing in the streets,

where scarcely anything but evil is before their eyes, the children

will hasten to the school, with their bread and butter in their hands,

in less than a quarter of an hour after they have left it, knowing

that they have an opportunity of playing there the remainder of their

dinner-time, so that they love the school, and but rarely wish to be

anywhere else.

The play-grounds of some schools are paved with bricks, which I have

found to answer very well, as they absorb the rain so quickly, that

ten minutes after a shower, the place is dry enough for the children

to play in; which, perhaps, would not be the case with any other kind

of paving. They are commonly placed flat on the ground, but I should

prefer them being put edge-ways, as they would last many years longer,

yet it would take nearly double the number of bricks were they so

placed.[A] If it be not paved, the ground will be soft, and the

children will make themselves dirty. It should be so managed that the

water may be carried off, for, if there are any puddles, the children

will get into them. Some persons have recommended a few cart-loads of

good iron-mould gravel, there being a sort which will bind almost like

a rock, if well rolled; but the children are liable to dig holes if it

is only gravel. If this is noticed in time it may be prevented; but if

they are suffered to proceed, and no notice be taken of it, it will be

very difficult to prevent them from continuing the practice. If money

can be saved by any plan, perhaps it is as well to notice it; but

after having weighed the advantages and disadvantages of gravelling,

I am of opinion, that bricks are preferable. I should also recommend

that fruit-trees be planted in the centre of the play-ground, and

likewise round the walls; which will delight the children, and teach

them to respect private property. If any person doubts the propriety

of this plan, I can only say we leave many play-grounds thus

ornamented: and instead of proving a temptation to the children, it

has so far become the means of confirming principles of honesty in

them, that they never touch a single flower or even a leaf in

the garden. There should also be a border of flowers round the

play-ground, of such sorts as will yield the most fragrance, which

will tend to counteract any disagreeable smell that may proceed from

the children, and thereby be conducive to their health, as well as to

that of those who have the charge of them. They will, besides, afford

the teacher an opportunity of giving the children many useful lessons;

for the more he teaches by things, and the less he teaches by signs,

the better. These things need be no expense to the establishment,

except the purchase in the first instance, for they will afford an

agreeable occupation for the master before and after school-hours,

prepare him in some measure for the duties of the day, and afford him

an ample opportunity of instilling a variety of ideas into the minds

of the children, and of tracing every thing up to the Great First

Cause. I have witnessed the good effects of these things, which makes

me desirous of humbly but earnestly recommending them to others.

[Footnote A: In Lancashire, and other places where flagging is cheap,

it has been found decidedly better than any other plan alluded to

above, the children will not hurt themselves more by falling on flags

than they would on bricks or pebbles.]

With regard to the expense: if 200 children pay two-pence each per

week[A], which is now the usual charge, the annual receipts will be,

deducting four weeks for holidays, about £80, and if the deficiency be

made up by subscriptions and donations from the friends of the system,

it may be easily adopted, and all its advantages secured. A village

school might be furnished for half the money, and supported at less

than half the expense. I QUESTION WHETHER IT DOES NOT COST THE COUNTRY

AS MUCH FOR EVERY INDIVIDUAL THAT IS TRANSPORTED OUT OF IT, AS WOULD

SUPPORT THREE INFANT SCHOOLS ANNUALLY, and secure good pay to the

teachers, with 200 infants in each school.

[Footnote A: In some parts of St. Giles's, Wapping, &c., &c., many of

the parents are not able to pay, and many that are, would sooner let

their children run the streets than pay a penny; yet the children of

the latter persons are the greater objects of charity; and it is the

children of such persons that chiefly fill our prisons. We want three

classes of infant schools: one for the middle class, who will pay; for

skilled mechanics, who will pay 2\_d\_. or 3\_d\_. per week; and for the

poor and illiterate who will pay nothing.]

Every year increases my conviction of the great importance of the

play-ground, and of the folly of some of my early views respecting it.

Finding a great variety of lessons and objects necessary to arrest

the attention of children, diversified as they are in disposition and

taste, it was supposed that an equal variety of toys was required for

the play-ground. A good supply of balls, battledores, shuttlecocks,

tops, whips, skipping-ropes, hoops, sticks, and wheelbarrows, was,

therefore, obtained, and we flattered ourselves that this must produce

universal happiness. In thus, however, we were most grievously

disappointed; for the balls frequently bounced over the wall,--the

players, not being able to throw them with the precision of Spartan

children, sometimes struck their comrades, perhaps, in the eye: if we

could succeed in quieting the sufferer, by a kiss and a sugar-plum,

the ear was as immediately afterwards saluted with the cry of, "O, my

chin, my chin," from some hapless wight having been star-gazing, and

another, anxious for as many strokes as possible, mistaking that part

for the bottom of his shuttlecock; while this would be followed by,

"O, my leg," from the untoward movement of a stick or a barrow. In

short, such scenes were insupportable; and what with the accidents

that arose, and the tops without strings, and the strings without

tops, the hoops without sticks, and the sticks without hoops, the

seizure of the favourite toy by one, and the inability of another to

get any thing, it was evident that we were wrong, but not so clear how

we could do otherwise.

It then occurred that we might provide some wood-bricks, about four

inches long, an inch and a half thick, and two inches and a half

wide, and of these a thousand were obtained. With these children are

exceedingly amused from the variety of forms in which they may be

placed, and of buildings which may be erected with them.

The play-ground should always be at the rear of the premises, and as

private as possible, that both teachers and pupils be secure from

annoyance of any kind. The entrance should be only through the school,

and no other way; this secures the flowers, the fruits, and the moral

training of the children.

[Illustration]

In addition to these, all that is required is a rotatory swing, of

which the above is a representation. To make one, a pole eighteen or

twenty feet long should be firmly fixed in the ground: three feet of

the but-end should be sunk, secured by sleepers to keep it steady: it

should be at least three quarters of a yard in girth at bottom, and

taper gradually to the top to half that size. An iron rim is to be

driven on the head of the pole to keep it from splitting, and then a

spindle at least an inch in diameter, with a shoulder, is to be fixed

in it; an iron wheel with four spokes turned up at the end like a

hook, to which four ropes are to be fastened, must then be made to

revolve on the spindle. As the ropes reach the ground, four children

may take hold of them and run round until they bear the whole weight

of the body on the arms; and this exercise will be found to strengthen

the muscles, and give vigour to the whole frame. In a large school

there should be two swings of this kind,--one for the girls, and the

other for the boys. The teachers must, however, be careful the first

few weeks, to train the children to look about them: this they are

but little disposed to do, hence the most impressive manner should be

adopted, and I will venture to say, should any injury be sustained

by the children, the fault \_will not be theirs\_. The effect of the

instruction thus urged will be valuable in other cases; for a child,

thus taught to watch against accident, will be careful in passing

crossings, and going through crowded streets, and thus be likely to

escape many dangers into which others fall. This exercise may also be

accompanied by instruction, as the children may repeat "The Cow," or

"The Sheep," or any other lesson, as the measure of the time

during which four may have the swing. It will, moreover, afford an

opportunity for detecting the selfishness of some children, by their

wishing to keep the ropes too long, and the passion of others, from

the vehemence with which they will insist on their rights; but, as on

such occasion, both are to be forbidden to swing any more that day,

they will soon learn to bear and forbear.

In the event of a child being thrown down from standing in the way,

all the children should be placed in the gallery, and this one shewn

them. If it appear hurt, all will pity it; let then the question be

put, How did this happen? and the answer will be, perhaps, "Please,

sir, because he did not make use of his eyes." Here, then, is full

opportunity to inculcate caution, and to inform and benefit the whole.

For example: the master may say, How many senses have we? The children

will answer, Five. \_Master\_.--Name them. \_Children\_.--Hearing, seeing,

smelling, tasting, and feeling. \_M\_. Where are the organs of sight?

\_C\_. Here (pointing to the eyes). \_M\_. Look at this child, and see if

he has them. (Here an inspection will take place, the sufferer will

look sheepish, and begin to perceive he has not made the best use of

the sense of seeing, whilst the singular observations of the children

will sharpen his faculties, and make such an impression as to cause

him to be more cautious in future; and many a scholar who is sitting

in judgment will profit by the circumstance.) I have known the lives

of several children saved by such simple lessons, and they are of as

much importance as any that are taught, though I am not quite sure

that all the teachers will think so. Too many, to save trouble, will

find fault with the swing; and I have known several instances where

the swing had been taken down in consequence. We have found the swing

answer in all three countries; it strengthens the muscles, which, in

physical education, is a matter of the highest importance. It has been

introduced into juvenile schools with similar success; and, also, in

ladies' boarding-schools I have personally inspected tine effects

produced. Under all these circumstances, and in every instance, I have

found the most beneficial effects produced, provided the exercise was

properly regulated and superintended. It will not do, therefore, to

have this important part of the system dispensed with. The teachers

must be present at all the exercises in the play-ground, or, more

properly speaking, the training-ground. Non-attention to this is a

capital error; and, if persisted in, must be followed with dismissal.

CHAPTER VII.

QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS.

\_Teachers should practice what they teach--Necessity of patience--Mere

automatons will not do for infant teachers--Disadvantage of using

excessive restraint--A master and mistress more efficient than two

mistresses--Objections to the sole government of females--Two frequent

use of Divine names should be avoided--General observations.\_

\* \* \* \* \*

--"Such authority, in shew, When most severe and minist'ring all its

force, Is but the graver countenance of love, Whose favour, like the

clouds of spring may lower, And utter now and then an awful voice,

But has a blessing in its darkest frown, Threat'ning at once and

nourishing the plant."--\_Thomson\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

I enter on this chapter with a full recollection of the painful sense

of incompetency I endured on becoming "a teacher of babes;" and this,

I trust, will enable me to offer any remarks on the present subject

with the humility that is desirable, blended with the confidence of

experience. It is a very common idea, that almost any person can

educate little children, and that it requires little or no ability;

but it will be found, on an enlightened and correct estimate of the

work, that this is a very great mistake: and I regret that this

mistake has been made by those who professed to understand the system,

and who have written upon it. But there is just this slight difference

between theory and practice: theory supposes such and such things to

be correct, which was my own case; but twelve months only of practical

effort very soon convinced me I was wrong. How frequently, for

instance, may we find children, ten or twelve years of age, who cannot

answer the most simple question, and who, nevertheless, have been to

school for several years. To give the children correct notions, is a

part of education seldom thought of: but if we really wish to form the

character of the rising generation, and to improve the condition of

society generally, the utmost attention must be given to this object.

Little, I should think, need be said to prove, that few ideas are

given in dame-schools. There may be a few as to which an exception

should be made; but, generally speaking, where the children of

mechanics are usually sent before the age of seven years, no such

thing is thought of. The mind of a child is compared by Mr. Locke to a

sheet of blank paper, and if it be the business of a tutor to

inscribe valuable lessons on the mind, it will require much patience,

gentleness, perseverance, self-possession, energy, knowledge of

human nature, and, above all, piety,--simple, sincere, and practical

piety,--to accomplish so great a work with propriety and success.

Whoever is in possession of these requisites, with the addition of a

lively temper, pleasing countenance, and some knowledge of music,

may be considered as a proper person to manage an infant school;

and whoever has charge of such an institution will find numerous

opportunities of displaying each and all of these qualifications.

It would be almost useless to attempt to cure the bad tempers of

children, if the master should encourage and manifest such evil

tempers in his own conduct; for children are not indifferent to what

they see in others: they certainly take notice of all our movements,

and consequently the greatest caution is necessary. It will be of

little purpose to endeavour to inculcate suitable precepts in the

minds of the children, unless they see them shine forth in the conduct

of the teacher.

How strangely it would sound, if, when a teacher was explaining to his

pupils the sin of swearing, a child should say, "Please, sir, I heard

you swear;" and it is just the same as to those faults which some

may consider of minor importance,--such as the indulgence of angry

passions,--in the presence of children. It must always be understood,

that the essence of the plan is to allow the children to speak,--not

what they do not feel and think, which has been but too general,--but

what they do think and feel. This children will always do if rightly

trained. Yes, with modesty and decorum, but with power! What will the

old class of pedagogues say to this? What! allow pupils to tell you of

your faults! Certainly; they know them; at least, those committed in

their presence. They talk of them to themselves, why not to us? Some

of the best \_lessons\_ I ever got were under similar circumstances.

Persons, in such circumstances, cannot be too circumspect, as every

trifling fault will be magnified, both by parents and children.

Indeed, character is of so much importance, that the designs of

benevolent individuals are very often frustrated by appointing

improper persons to fill such situations. I have seen, more than once,

the interests of two hundred babes sacrificed to serve one individual;

and persons have been chosen merely because they had been unfortunate,

and to serve them they have been placed in a situation disagreeable

to themselves, and unprofitable to the children. It is one thing

to possess certain information, but it is another to be able to

communicate that information to infants. Patience is a virtue

absolutely indispensable, as it will frequently take the master or

mistress a whole hour to investigate a subject that may appear of

little or no importance: such as one child accusing another of

stealing a trifle,--as a plum, a cherry, a button, or any other thing

of little value. The complainant and defendant will expect justice

done to them by the master or mistress; and in order to do this, much

time and trouble will, in some cases, be necessary. Should a hasty

conclusion be formed, and the accused be punished for what he has not

been guilty of, the child will be sensible that an injury has been

done him, feel dissatisfied with his tutors, and, consequently,

will not pay them the respect they ought to have. Besides, it will

frequently be found, on examination, that the accuser is really the

most in fault, and I think I have convinced many children that this

has been the case, and they have retired satisfied with my decision.

For when a child is convinced that justice will be done him, he will

open his case freely and boldly; but if he has any idea that it will

be otherwise, he will keep one half of the facts in his own mind, and

will not reveal them. I once formed a hasty conclusion in the case of

two children, and happened to decide directly contrary to what I ought

to have done; the consequence was, that the injured child endeavoured

to do that for himself which he found I had not done for him, and

pleaded his own cause with the opposite party in the play-ground; but

finding that he could not prevail on him, and being sensible that he

had been wronged, he was so much hurt, that he brought his father the

next day, and we re-considered the case; when it was found that the

child was correct, and that I was wrong. Here I found how necessary it

was to exercise the utmost patience, in order to enable me to judge

rightly, and to convince my little pupils, that I had the greatest

desire to do them justice. I compare an infant school to a little

commonwealth, the head or governor of which is naturally the master.

An infant school master or mistress is not to consider anything

relating to the rights of his little community, as trifling or

unimportant. However justly it might be considered such in itself,

yet, comparatively, it is a matter of moment to the parties concerned,

and such therefore it should be esteemed by him who is the arbitrator

of their rights and the legislator and judge of the infant state. He

will have, indeed, to act the part of counsel, judge, and jury; and

although the children cannot find words to plead their own cause, yet

by their looks and gestures, they will convince you that they know

when you have rightly decided; and it appears to me, that the future

conduct of the children in the world, will depend, in a great measure,

upon the correctness of the master's decisions.

One would suppose, to hear the observations of some persons, that mere

automatons would do for masters and mistresses. By them the system is

considered as every thing, while the persons who are to teach it, have

been considered as secondary objects; but a system, however perfect in

itself, will be productive of little good, unless it be committed to

persons possessed of some degree of skill; as the best watch will

go wrong, if not properly attended to. We cannot, therefore, be too

circumspect in the choice of the persons to whom we commit the care

and education of the rising generation. There is something so powerful

in correctness of deportment, that even infants respect it; and this

will operate more on their minds than many imagine. It does not

appear necessary to me, that children should be kept under excessive

restraint by their tutors; they should rather be encouraged to make

their teacher their confidant, for by this means he will become

acquainted with many things, the knowledge of which it is essential

he should possess, both as it regards himself; and the welfare of his

pupils. If the child be enthralled, he will seek some other persons

to whom he may open his little mind, and should that person be

ill-disposed, the most serious consequences will not unfrequently

follow. I know the source from whence all assistance is derived, and I

am taught to believe, that such assistance will not be withheld from

those who diligently seek it. I am well aware that I shall have to

render an account of my stewardship to the Almighty, for every child

that may have been placed under my care, and I feel that to do so

unblameably, requires much assistance from above.

Let not those, then, who are similarly circumstanced with myself;

think that I address them in the spirit of arrogance, with a

pre-conceived opinion of my own sufficiency. I wish that all who teach

may be more fit for the situation than I am. I know many who are an

honour to their profession, as well as the situation they fill; but, I

am sorry to say, I think they do not all meet with the encouragement

they merit. It is not always those who do their duty the best that are

most valued; but if a man's conscience do not upbraid him, he has in

its approval a high reward.

And now, as to a matter on which there is some difference of opinion,

\_viz\_., whether women are or are not as fit for conductors of infant

schools as men; my decided opinion is, that \_alone\_ they are not.

There should be in every school a master and a mistress. In the first

place, in an infant school, the presence of the man, as of a father in

a family, will insure a far greater degree of respect and attention on

the part of the children. This does not arise from the exercise of any

greater degree of harshness or severity than a mother would be capable

of using; nor is it to be attributed, as some suppose, to the less

frequent presence of the father in the case of many families, but is

rather to be accounted for by an intuitive perception of the greater

firmness and determination of the character of the man. To those who

deny this, I would give as a problem for solution, a case by no means

unfrequent, and which most of my readers will have witnessed,--a

family in which the mother--by no means incurring the charge of

spoiling the child, by sparing the rod--is less heeded, less promptly

obeyed in her commands, than a father who seldom or never makes use of

any such means. The mother scolds, threatens, scourges, and is at last

reluctantly and imperfectly obeyed; the father, either with reference

to his own commands, or seconding those of the mother, \_speaks\_,

and is instantly regarded. The idea of disputing his authority, or

neglecting or disobeying his laws, never once enters the minds of his

children. Exactly the same is it in an infant school,--the presence of

a man insures attention and gains respect from the children, not only

at first, whilst the novelty of such control might be supposed to

operate, but permanently; as I am sure all who have candidly examined

the schools where two women preside, and those conducted by a man and

a woman, must have seen.

Another objection to the sole government of females (I mean the class

of females who are likely to accept such situations) in these schools,

is, they have not the physical strength, nor, at present, intellectual

powers, sufficient for the task. In saying thus, I trust I shall not

be suspected of wishing to offend my fair countrywomen. That they have

not sufficient physical strength is the intention of nature; that they

are deficient in mental energy is the defect of education. I trust,

therefore, that no offence will be assumed where no blame is attached.

It has been a point much disputed, whether there be really an original

and intrinsic difference in the mental powers of the two sexes, and it

has been of course differently decided by the respective disputants.

With this I shall have nothing to do; but these things are certain;

that the minds of \_both\_ are capable of much greater activity and more

important results than have been generally supposed; and that whilst

education has not done what it ought for man, it has done far less for

woman. This it is, then, which affords an additional argument in my

mind for a master and a mistress. For let it not be imagined, that

I would dismiss women altogether from the system--that I think them

useless or even dispensable in an infant school. If, indeed, one

or the other \_must\_ be done without, and I had my choice, I should

certainly give my voice for a woman; but to carry the system into full

effect requires \_both\_. There is ample opportunity for the offices of

maternal love, of which man is at best but a poor imitator; neither

can it be denied, that an active intelligent woman is a useful

auxiliary to the labours of the man in the duties of the school. The

authoritative presence of the man is the more necessary in the infant

system, because one grand object is, to rule without harshness, and

by that principle of love which is in no degree incompatible with the

respect felt for a kind but judicious schoolmaster. Some children,

indeed, so far as regards authority, might be very well managed by a

mistress only, but then it must be recollected that an infant school

exhibits every variety of temper and disposition; and even were it

otherwise, the objection as to intellectual incompetence and physical

strength, before adverted to, would still hold good.

Such, indeed, is the opinion of the unfitness of females for the

occupation of teaching, in Scotland, that in many places the very idea

of it is scouted. The people of that country have scarcely heard of a

\_school-mistress\_, even for the youngest children; and certain it is,

that education is much better conducted in Scotland than in most other

places. If the minds of children are to be cultivated, and a firm and

decided tone given to their characters, say they, what can be the use

of sending them to a school conducted by a woman only? And I must

candidly admit, that I perfectly agree with them on this head, and

have therefore deemed it my duty to be thus explicit on the matter.[A]

[Footnote A: I am sorry to say that, at this time, the people

of Scotland have been led into the same error, of which I have

complained. I did hope they would never have allowed themselves to be

led away from their old, judicious, and workable plans, far the sake

of party, or fashion; but so it is, and it is much to be regretted:

however, it is a consolation to know that it is not universal.]

One thing I must add, by way of conclusion: to render any man or woman

competent to discharge the duties of the situation efficiently, the

\_heart\_ of the teacher must be in the school. If there be not the zeal

of the amateur, the skill of the professor will be of little avail.

The maxim will apply to every species of occupation, but it is

peculiarly true as to that of an infant school teacher. To those who

can feel no other interest than that which the profit gives to the

employment, it will soon become not only irksome, but exceedingly

distasteful. But certain I am that it is possible to feel it to be

what it is--an employment not only most important, but likewise most

interesting. It is one which a philosopher might choose for the study

of the human character, and a philanthropist for its improvement.

One word more, and I have done. I have seen what I could have wished

had been otherwise, viz., not sufficient discrimination used in giving

\_religious instruction\_; improper times have been chosen, too much

\_shew\_ has been made of it, too much freedom has been used with \_the

divine names\_; and I have sometimes been so shocked at the levity

displayed, as to have considered it little less than \_profanation\_.

I wish to lay the utmost stress on what has been stated, as a failure

on the part of a master and mistress is most grievous and lamentable.

I have seen schools, where little or nothing has been done, because of

the inefficiency of the teachers. Moral and religious qualifications

are confessedly of the first importance, but those which are mental

are to be highly estimated. I differ with a gentleman who has written

on this subject, when he says, that any clever boy who has been

educated in a national school, will accomplish the end; because

the system through which he has passed neither gives a sufficient

knowledge of \_things\_ nor of \_words\_, nor does it sufficiently develop

the faculties to prepare him for such a service.

One cause of failure in these respects has been undoubtedly the paltry

remuneration which some receive, and I would earnestly recommend the

supporters and conductors of infant schools to try the effect of

liberality by all the means they can command. Persons of talent ought

to be found for this work, and then they should be appropriately paid;

but if \_any\_ are to be deemed suitable, and if the having them at a

low rate be a special reason for their engagement, it would be better

at once to revert to the old system, than to destroy, by such means,

the public confidence in the plans now suggested.

I entertain a full conviction that the infant system will flourish

most where I once least expected its adoption: I mean in Scotland,

because of the high importance attached to the essential

qualifications of teachers, and because of the attention and kindness

which they continually receive.

It is to be lamented that most of the schools connected with the

established church are managed by women only, whilst the schools

connected with the dissenters are generally conducted by a man and

woman; the consequence is, that the children educated under the

dissenters will be better taught than those connected with the

established church, which is an error I should be glad to see remedied

as soon as possible. I have no need to speak in favour of infant

school masters, as many of them have been the greatest enemies I ever

had, whilst on the contrary, the mistresses have generally been very

friendly to me, and not been subject to those petty jealousies which

the masters have too frequently evinced; nevertheless, the subject

treated of in this place involves a principle which cannot be conceded

without doing great injury to the infant system, and on those grounds

I advocate the necessity of a master in conjunction with the mistress.

Many teachers, and other persons who have written on the subject, have

talked largely of making improvements, whilst the hints given in this

book have been entirely neglected; as this was the first book that

ever was written on the subject, and the writer of it the first man

that ever brought the thing practically to bear, it sounds a little

odd, that people should talk about improvements before they have

pointed out the errors of the original inventor. Others again have

borrowed largely from me, and have neither had the good manners nor

the common honesty to say from whence they got their information.

Societies have been formed at the eleventh hour, after the infant

system had been twenty years in practice, who puff off books written

by some of their own members, which do not contain the original idea,

whilst my books, for some cause best known to themselves, have never

been recommended, or indeed ever mentioned, though I could take page

after page from those modern writers on the subject, and justly claim

them as my own. This is not what one ought to expect amongst people

who call themselves Christians: a truly good man is delighted to do

justice to his fellow-men, because in doing so, he never fails to

obtain justice himself; but there are some persons whose minds are so

truly selfish that they cannot see how good can accrue to themselves,

if they do what is right to others: and I regret to say I have met

with not a few, who have been engaged in the art of teaching, who have

been guilty of the mean and contemptible conduct I have hinted at

above, and it is to deter others from falling into the same errors

that I have ventured to allude to this subject at all. It would be

invidious to mention names, which I could very easily do, and should

this be persisted in, if I am spared, I shall most certainly mention

the parties by name. I would not be understood to say that no

improvements can be made in the infant system: far from it. No doubt

it will be improved, and that to a great extent; but that will only be

in process of time, and by practical people, who understand more

of the nature of the infant mind than I do, and may hereafter have

greater experience than I have had; but they must work hard for it,

as I have done, and be doers as well as talkers: and when I see such

improvements made, I trust the Almighty will enable me to be the first

to acknowledge them. At present, however, though I have travelled over

a large space, and visited many hundred schools, and also opened many

hundred, and have not yet seen the mighty improvements of which I have

read so much, and I do beg that those teachers who may be engaged in

the system will be kind enough to try my plans, prior to introducing

so many crotchets of their own. They are to recollect we never

intended to make prodigies of the little children; it never was our

object to teach them things that were only fit for men and women: the

fact must never be lost sight of that they are infants, and that as

infants they must be treated.

It is very easy for any one to theorise, and form schemes for the

education of children, and to introduce changes which may appear

beneficial. Fancy is very prolific, and a number of books may easily

be read, and yet the right knowledge not be gained. The chief book

to be studied is the infant mind itself, considered as a great and

wonderful work of the Creator, with a sincere desire to know all

its faculties and powers, and the various simple laws by which its

operations are governed. The teacher ought also to turn his thoughts

within himself, to study his own mind, especially in his recollections

of very early childhood, and the modes by which knowledge is gradually

acquired. These things, carefully and dilligently done, will give more

information on the proper method of educating and developing the young

mind than the perusal of a hundred volumes. This I have endeavoured

all my life to do, and have had to deal with many thousands of

children who have been to me a book for constant study. From this

extensive observation and experience, all my plans have been formed,

and my opinions derived. If any one has done the same, or more, to him

I will gladly concede; but I am not aware that any one individual, not

even Pestalozzi, has run a similar career.

CHAPTER VIII.

HINTS FOR CONDUCTING AN INFANT SCHOOL.

\_Classification--Getting the children into order--Language--Lessons

on objects--Rules to be observed by parents--Daily routine of

instruction--Opening prayer and hymn--Object or developing

lessons--Synopsis of a week's instruction--Cleanliness--Never frighten

children--Guard against forgetfulness--Observe punctuality--Be

strictly accurate in your expressions--Guard against the entrance of

disease--Maxims for teachers--Resolutions\_.

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"Whate'er is best administer'd is best."--\_Pope\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

Having had considerable practice in teaching children in the various

parts of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, it may be necessary to

give a few hints on the subject of organizing an infant school. I

have generally found on opening one, that the children had no idea of

acting together. In order, therefore, to gain this object, it will be

found necessary to have recourse to what we call \_manual lessons\_,

which consist in the children holding up their hands all at one time,

and putting them down in the same manner; throwing the right or the

left foot out; putting their hands together, or behind them; or rising

from their seats all at one time; clapping hands, which is a very good

exercise; holding up their hands and twirling the fingers; holding up

the forefinger and bringing it down on the palm, in time to some tune;

imitating the action of sawing wood, and the sound produced by the

action of the saw; doing this both ways, as it is done in the saw-pit,

with both hands, and by the carpenter with the right; imitating the

cobbler mending shoes, the carpenter plaining wood, the tailor sewing,

and any other trade which is familiar and pleasing to children.

This we do in the first instance, because it is calculated to please

the infants, and is one grand step towards order. After the first day

or two, the children will begin to act together, and to know each

other; but until this is the case, they will be frequently peevish,

and want to go home; any method, therefore, that can be taken at first

to gratify them, should be adopted; for unless this can be done, you

may be sure they will cry. Having proceeded thus far, we have then to

class them according to their capacity and age, and according as they

shew an aptitude in obeying your several commands. Those who obey them

with the greatest readiness may be classed together.

I have found it difficult, at all times, to keep up the attention of

infants, without giving them something to do; so that when they are

saying the tables in arithmetic, we always cause them to move either

their hands or feet, and sometimes to march round the school. The best

way we have yet discovered is the putting their hands one on the other

every time they speak a sentence. If they are marching they may count

one, two, three, four, five, six, &c.

Having classed them, and found that each child knows its own place in

the school, you may select one of the cleverest of each class for a

monitor. Some of the children will learn many of the tables sooner

than the others; in this case, the teacher may avail himself of their

assistance, by causing each child to repeat what he knows in an

audible manner, the other children repeating after him, and performing

the same evolutions that he does; and by this means the rest will soon

learn. Then the master may go on with something else, taking care to

obtain as much assistance from the children as he can, for he will

find that unless he does so, he will injure his lungs, and render

himself unfit to keep up their attention, and to carry on the business

of the school.

When the children have learned to repeat several of the tables,

and the monitors to excite their several classes, and keep them in

tolerable order, they may go on with the other parts of the plan,

such as the spelling and reading, picture lessons, &c., which will

presently be described. But care must be taken that in the beginning

too much be not attempted. The first week may be spent in getting them

in order, without thinking of anything else; and I should advise

that not more than sixty children be then admitted, that they may be

reduced to order, in some measure, before any more are received, as

all that come after will quickly imitate them. I should, moreover,

advise visitors not to come for some time after a school is opened,

for several reasons; first, because the children must be allowed time

to learn, and there will be nothing worth seeing; secondly, they take

off the children's attention, and interfere with the master: and,

lastly, they may go away dissatisfied, and thereby injure the cause

which they intend to promote.

In teaching infants to sing, I have found it the best way to sing the

psalm or hymn several times in the hearing of the children, without

their attempting to do so until they have some idea of the tune;

because, if all the children are allowed to attempt, and none of them

know it, it prevents those who really wish to learn from catching the

sounds. Nothing, however, can be more ridiculous or absurd than the

attempts at singing I have heard in some schools. And here, I

would caution teachers against too much singing; and also against

introducing it at improper times. Singing takes much \_out\_ of the

teacher, which will soon be felt in the chest, and cause pain and

weakness there; and, if persevered in, premature \_death\_; and with

women much sooner than men. This is another reason why one of each

sex should be employed in the work. Singing is an exhilarating and

exciting lesson; the children always like it: but even they are

injured by the injudicious management of it, and by having too much of

it each day; or the having two or even three exciting lessons at the

same time. For example: I have seen children singing, marching, and

clapping hands at the same time; and they are prompted and led by the

teachers to do so. Here are three exciting lessons together, which

ought to be separate: the result is, a waste of energy and strength,

on the part of teacher and children, which is sometimes fatal to both.

The exciting lessons were intended to be judiciously blended with the

drier, yet necessary, studies. If the latter are neglected, and the

former only retained, no greater perversion of the plans could occur,

and a more fatal error could not be committed.

You must not expect order until your little officers are well drilled,

which may be done by collecting them together after the other children

are gone, and instructing them in what they are to do. Every monitor

should know his work, and when you have taught him this, you must

require it to be done. To get good order, you must make every monitor

answerable for the conduct of his class. It is astonishing how some

of the little fellows will strut about, big with the importance of

office. And here I must remark, it will require some caution to

prevent them from taking too much upon themselves; so prone are we,

even in our earliest years, to abuse the possession of power.

The way by which we teach the children hymns, is to let one child

stand in a place where he may be seen by the rest, with the book in

his hand; he then reads one line, and stops until all the children in

the school have repeated it, which they do simultaneously; he then

repeats another, and so on, successively, until the hymn is finished.

This method is adopted with every thing that is to be committed to

memory, so that every child in the school has an equal chance of

learning.

I have mentioned that the children should be classed: in order

to facilitate this, there should be a board fastened to the wall

perpendicularly, the same width as the seats, every fifteen feet, all

round the school; this will separate one class from another, and be

the cause of the children knowing their class the sooner. Make every

child hang his hat over where he sits, in his own class, as this will

save much trouble. "Have a place for every thing, and every thing in

its place." This will bring the children into habits of order. Never

do any thing for a child that he is able to do for himself; but teach

him to put his own hat and coat on, and hang them up again when

he comes to school. Teach every child to help himself as soon as

possible. If one falls down, and you know that he is able to get up

himself, never lift him up; if you do, he will always lie till you can

give him your aid. Have a slate, or a piece of paper, properly ruled,

hanging over every class; let every child's name that is in the class

be written on it, with the name of the monitor; teach the monitor the

names as soon as you can, and then he will tell you who is absent.

Have a semicircle before every lesson, and make the children keep

their toes to the mark; brass nails driven in the floor are the best,

or flat brass or iron let into the floor. When a monitor is asking

the children questions, let him place his stool in the centre of the

semicircle, and the children stand around him. Let the monitors ask

what questions they please, they will soon get fond of the process,

and their pupils will soon be equally fond of answering them. Suppose

the monitor ask. What do I sit on? Where are your toes? What do you

stand on? What is before you? What behind you? Let the monitors be

instructed in giving simple object lessons on any familiar substance,

such as a piece of wood, of stone, of iron, of paper, of bone, of

linen, &c. Let them question their class as to the qualities first,

and then the various uses to which the object is applied. These

lessons will be of incalculable benefit to the children, and give them

an early desire to inquire into the nature, qualities, and uses of

every natural object they come into contact with. We will suppose the

monitor holds in his hand a piece of leather; he first asks, "What is

this?" The children will simultaneously exclaim, "A piece of leather."

This being answered, he will proceed to the qualities, and will have

either from his class, or by his own help, the following answers: "It

is dry, it is smooth, it is hard, it is tough, it is pliable, it is

opaque," &c. He will then question them as to its uses, and will ask,

"What is made from leather?" A. Boots and shoes. Q. What use is it of

else? A. Books are bound with it; and so on through all its uses. He

will then ask them how leather is made, and give them information

which he has himself previously received from the teacher as to the

mode of tanning leather, and the various processes which it goes

through. Indeed, there is no end to the varied information which

children may thus receive from simple natural objects. At first they

will have no idea of this mode of exercising the thinking powers. But

the teacher must encourage them in it, and they will very speedily

get fond of it, and be able to give an answer immediately. It is very

pleasing to witness this. I have been much delighted at the questions

put, and still more so at the answers given. Assemble all the very

small children together as soon as you can: the first day or two they

will want to sit with their brothers or sisters, who are a little

older than themselves. But the sooner you can separate them the

better, as the elder children frequently plague the younger ones;

and I have always found that the youngest ones are the happiest by

themselves.

In all cases let teachers be careful to avoid the "parrot system," and

to remember that while it is necessary to infuse a certain amount of

information into the child's mind, it can only be made its own by

drawing it back again and getting its own ideas upon it--this is

called development, which is a thing universally disregarded in almost

every school I have seen; and it is a general complaint made by almost

every modern writer on education; and many have objected to the infant

system on this account, because the teachers of it were not acquainted

with its end and essence. The true infant system is a system of

development; no other system can be of lasting benefit to the country

in general, nor to the pupils in particular; the genuine infant system

is not subject to the fundamental errors so much complained of; it has

been invented for the purpose of operating upon all the faculties, and

the machine must not be condemned merely because the teachers do not

know how to work it; but every committee, and each individual in a

committee, appear to lose sight of these principles, in order to try

how much originality may be displayed, and thus utility is sacrificed

to novelty; thus we may find as many infant systems as there are days

in the year; and I have been made chargeable by certain writers for

the errors of others; but these writers have not condescended to

examine into the merits of the system for which I have been so many

years an advocate.

But enough of this: we will now suppose that the little flock are

brought by thus time into something like order; we are next to

consider the means of securing other objects. Although the following

rules for this purpose are given, it must not be supposed, that they

are presented as a model not to be departed from. If they can

be improved so much the better, but some such will be found

indispensable.

\* \* \* \* \*

RULES

\_To be observed by the Parents of Children admitted into the ----

Infant School\_.

1.

Parents are to send their children clean washed, with their hair cut

short and combed, and their clothes well mended, by half-past eight

o'clock in the morning, to remain till twelve.

2.

If any child be later in attendance than nine o'clock in the morning,

that child must be sent back until the afternoon; and in case of being

later than two in the afternoon, it will be sent back for the day.

3.

Parents may send their children's dinners with them in the morning, so

that the children may be taken care of the whole day, to enable the

mother to go out to work. This can only be done where the teachers

reside on the premises.

4.

If a child be absent for a length of time, without a notice being sent

to the master or mistress, assigning a satisfactory reason for the

absence, such child will not be permitted to return again to the

school.

Saturday is a holyday.[A]

[Footnote A: In Ireland the schools do not commence business till ten

in the morning, and the children remain till three, and do not go home

in the interval. In Scotland the rules are nearly similar.]

\*\*\* It is earnestly hoped that parents will see their own interest, as

well as that of their children, in strictly observing these rules; and

they are exhorted to submit to their children being governed by the

master and mistress; to give them good instruction and advice; to

accustom them to family prayer; but particularly to see that they

repeat the Lord's prayer, when they rise in the morning, and when they

retire to rest, and assist in their learning the commandments; and to

set before them a good example; for in so doing, they may humbly

hope that the blessing of Almighty God will rest upon them and their

families; for we are assured in the holy Scriptures, that if we train

up a child in the way he should go, when he is old he will not depart

from it, Prov. xxii. 6. Therefore parents may be instrumental in the

promotion of the welfare of their children in this life, and of their

eternal happiness in the world to come.

\* \* \* \* \*

On each of these rules I will make a few remarks.

\_First rule\_. Some parents are so habitually dirty, that they would

not wash their children from one week's end to another, unless

required so to do; and if it be done for them, they will not be so

thankful as when compelled to do it themselves. This I have found from

experience.

\_Second rule\_. This has its advantages; for it would not be right

to punish the children when the fault rests with their parents;

consequently, by sending them home, the real authors of the evil are

punished. Many parents have told me, that when their children were

at home, they employed themselves in singing the alphabet, counting,

patting their hands, &c. &c.; that it was impossible to keep an infant

asleep, that they were glad to get them out of the way, and that they

would take care that they should not be late again.

But there is no rule without an exception. I have found that this has

its disadvantages; for some of the elder children, when they wanted a

half-holiday, would take care to be late, in order to find the door

shut, although they were sent in proper time by their parents; this,

when detected, subjects them to a pat on the hand, which is the only

corporeal punishment we have. If this rule were not strictly enforced,

the children would be coming at all hours of the day, which would put

the school into such disorder, that we should never know when all the

children had said their lessons.

\_Third rule\_. This is of great service to those parents who go out

to work; for by sending their children's dinners with them, they are

enabled to attend to their employment in comfort, and the children,

when properly disciplined, will be no additional trouble to the

teacher, for they will play about the play-ground, while he takes his

dinner, without doing any mischief.

\_Fourth rule\_. Many persons will keep their children away for a month

or two when nothing is the matter with them, consequently the children

will lose almost all they have learned at school. Besides this,

children are kept out, who perhaps would attend regularly, and we

should never know how many children were in the establishment. If,

therefore, a parent does not attend to this rule, the child's name is

struck off the book.

On the admission of every child, the parents should be supplied with a

copy of the preceding rules, as this will prevent them from pleading

any excuse; it should be fastened on pasteboard, otherwise they will

double it up and put it into their pockets, and forget all about it;

but being on pasteboard, they may hang it up in their dwellings. The

short exhortation that follows, it is hoped, may have its use, by

reminding the parents of their duty to co-operate with those persons

who have the welfare both of themselves and their children at heart.

The reasons for the holiday of Saturday are, first, that the teacher

requires a rest, the infant system being so laborious. Second, that

the school-room requires to be thoroughly cleaned; and, thirdly, that

many of the mothers are obliged to wash the children's clothes on a

Saturday because they have not a sufficient change, and if they do

not have the Saturday, they will break the Sabbath by washing them on

Sunday.

I shall next speak of the \_daily routine\_ of instruction.

If we would be successful in our labours, we most ask for help,--we

must solicit aid from that Being who never yet denied it when

sincerely and fervently implored. A minister who desires to instruct

his flock with effect, never fails to commence his work with

supplication; and certainly every teacher must ask for help, and

instruct his pupils to do so too, if he really wish to be successful.

If the wisest and best of men ask assistance from God to teach their

fellow-men, and feel and know it to be necessary so to do, who would

not ask assistance to instruct infants?

"To lead them into virtue's path,

And up to truth divine."

If we had only to educate the \_head\_, prayer might be less necessary.

But the promoters of \_infant schools\_ want to affect the \_heart\_;

to operate upon the will and the conscience, as well as on the

understanding; to make good men rather than learned men--men of

\_wisdom\_, rather than men of \_knowledge\_: and he who has this work to

accomplish, should remember the Saviour's declaration, "Without me

ye can do nothing." Whilst therefore I would avoid too frequent

repetition of the divine names in tire presence of the children, and

never fail to let them know the difference between talking religion

and doing religion, and in every case avoid the very appearance of the

form without the essence, I would in such case, avoid long prayers,

and take care that what was said in their presence should be short,

and to the point, keeping in mind the scripture maxim, to avoid long

repetitions as the heathen do, who think they shall be heard for their

much speaking; and little children cannot have the simple truths of

the Word pourtrayed to them in too simple a manner.

To use prayers with little children composed of hard words taken from

scholastic theology, is contrary to common sense. How is it possible

that they can either understand or feel them? To utter prayer before

them in dull and melancholy tones, and with grimaces of countenance,

is calculated to give a false and gloomy impression of religion, and

has often done so. I have known little children alarmed and frightened

at such things; for sounds and appearances speak more strongly to

them than words.--Christ said of the Pharisees, "they disfigure their

faces." Our Saviour's direction is, after this manner, pray ye--"Our

Father," thus directing us to draw near to the Most High God as a

heavenly father, rich in mercy to all them that call upon him. True,

indeed, it is that "all have sinned," but a "new and living way" is

provided whereby we may "draw near with boldness to a throne of grace

to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Cowper never

penned a truer line than this;

"True piety is cheerful as the day;"

and such an impression of it should ever be given to the young. The

best prayer of a master for his children, is the perpetual and strong

desire of his heart for God's blessing upon them, which, when genuine

and sincere, will without doubt be recorded on high, and will also

urge him on to a faithful and unceasing discharge of his duties

towards them. To possess this is indeed to "pray without ceasing," and

will prevent an unnecessary multiplication of "long prayers," "vain

repetitions," and "much speaking."

But to proceed. The children being assembled, should be desired to

stand up, and immediately afterwards to kneel down, all close to their

seats, and as silently as possible: those who are not strong enough to

kneel, may be allowed to sit down. This being done, a child is to

be placed in the centre of the school, and to repeat the following

prayer:--

"O God, our heavenly Father, thou art good to us: we would serve thee;

we have sinned and done wrong many times. Jesus Christ died on the

cross for us. Forgive our sins for Jesus' sake; may the Holy Spirit

change our hearts, and make us to love God; help us to-day to be good

children and to do what is right. Keep us from wicked thoughts and

bad tempers; make us try to learn all that we are taught; keep us in

health all the day. We would always think of God, and when we die may

we go to heaven. God bless our fathers and mothers, and sisters and

brothers, and our teachers, and make us obedient and kind, for Jesus

Christ's sake. Amen."

Perhaps it would be better under all the circumstances, to use a

simple prayer out of the Book of Common Prayer.

The children afterwards repeat the Lord's prayer, and then sing a

hymn; for instance, the following:

When first the morning light we see,

And from our beds arise,

We to our God should thankful be,

Who every want supplies.

'Twas God who made the brilliant sun,

That gives all day its light;

And it was God who made the moon

And stars, which shine at night.

The fish that in the water swim,

The beasts upon the land,

Were all created first by Him,

And shew His mighty hand.

The food we eat, the clothes we wear,

'Tis God alone can give;

And only by His love and care,

Can little children live.

Then let us ever caution take,

His holy laws to keep;

And praise him from the time we wake,

Until again we sleep.

Immediately after this they proceed to their lessons; which are fixed

to what are called lesson-posts. To each of these posts there is a

monitor, who is provided with a piece of cane for a pointer. This post

is placed opposite to his class; and every class has one, up to which

the monitor brings the children three or four at a time, according

to the number he has in his class. We have fourteen classes, and

sometimes more, which are regularly numbered, so that we have one

hundred children moving and saying their lessons at one time. When

these are gone through, the children are supplied with pictures, which

they put on the post, the same as the spelling and reading lessons,

but say them in a different manner. We find that if a class always

goes through its lessons at one post, it soon loses its attraction;

and consequently, although we cannot change them from post to post in

the spelling and reading lessons, because it would be useless to put a

child to a reading post that did not know its letters, yet we can do

so in the picture lessons, as the children are all alike in learning

the objects. One child can learn an object as quick as another, so

that we may have many children that can tell the name of different

subjects, and even the names of all the geometrical figures, who do

not know all the letters in the alphabet; and I have had children,

whom one might think were complete blockheads, on account of their

not being able to learn the alphabet so quickly as some of the other

children, and yet those very children would learn things which

appeared to me ten times more difficult. This proves the necessity of

variety, and how difficult it is to legislate for children. Instead,

therefore, of the children standing opposite their own post, they go

round from one to another, repeating whatever they find at each post,

until they have been all round the school. For instance, at No. 1 post

there may be the following objects; the horse, the ass, the zebra, the

cow, the sheep, the goat, the springing antelope, the cameleopard, the

camel, the wild boar, the rhinoceros, the elephant, the hippopotamus,

the lion, the tiger, the leopard, the civet, the weazel, the great

white bear, the hyena, the fox, the greenland dog, the hare, the mole,

the squirrel, the kangaroo, the porcupine, and the racoon. Before

commencing these lessons, two boys are selected by the master, who

perhaps are not monitors. These two boys bring the children up to a

chalk line that is made near No. 1 post, eight at a time; one of the

boys gets eight children standing up ready, always beginning at one

end of the school, and takes them to this chalk line, whilst the other

boy takes them to No. 1 post, and delivers them up to the charge of

No. 1 monitor. No. 1 monitor then points to the different animals with

a pointer, until the name of every one that is on his plate has been

repeated; this done, he delivers them to No. 2 monitor, who has a

different picture at his post; perhaps the following: the fishmonger,

mason, hatter, cooper, butcher, blacksmith, fruiterer, distiller,

grocer, turner, carpenter, tallow-chandler, milliner, dyer, druggist,

wheelwright, shoemaker, printer, coach-maker, bookseller, bricklayer,

linen-draper, cabinet-maker, brewer, painter, bookbinder. This done,

No. 2 monitor delivers them over to No. 3 monitor, who may have a

representation of the following African costumes: viz. Egyptian Bey,

Ashantee, Algerine, Copts woman, Mameluke, native of Morocco, Tibboo

woman, Egyptian woman, Fellah, Bedouin Arab, Turkish foot soldier,

Maltese, Rosettan, native of Cairo, Turkish gentleman, Bosjesman,

native of Coronna, native of Namacqua, Caffree, native of Tamaha,

native of Ebo. Having repeated these, No. 3 monitor hands them over to

No. 4, who perhaps has an engraved clock face, with hands composed of

two pieces of wood, over which paper in the shape of clock hands has

been pasted; he gives the children a lesson from this object, explains

to them the difference between the minute and second-hand, shews them

their uses, and points out the dots which mark the minutes, and the

figures which divide it into hours, makes them count the seconds, and

soon tell the hour. No. 4 then gives the class to No. 5 monitor, who

has at his post a representation of the mariner's compass; he explains

its uses, shews them the cardinal points, tells them how it was

discovered, and then he will move the hands around, beginning at the

north, and making the children repeat as he moves the hands, north,

north-north-east, north-east, east-north-east, east, east-south-east,

south-east, south-south-east, south, south-south west, south-west,

west-south-west, west, west-north-west, north-west, north-north-west,

north. The degrees, &c., may be considered as going too far for

infants; we therefore reserve them until we treat of juvenile schools.

We have not thought it necessary to name all the points of the

compass, but have confined ourselves to the principal ones. No. 5 then

hands the class to No. 6, who has on his post representations of the

following fishes, viz., whale, sword fish, white shark, sturgeon,

skate, John Dorey, salmon, grayling, porpoise, electrical eel, horned

silure, pilot fish, mackerel, trout, red char, smelt, carp, bream,

road goldfish, pike, garfish, perch, sprat, chub, telescope carp, cod,

whiting, turbot, flounder, flying scorpion, sole, sea porcupine, sea

cock, flying fish, trumpet fish, common eel, turtle, lobster, crab,

shrimp, star fish, streaked gilt head, remora, lump fish, holocenter,

torpedo. No. 6, then gives the class to No. 7; and as variety is the

life and soul of the plan, his post may be supplied with a botanic

plate, containing representations of the following flowers:--daffodil,

fox-glove, hyacinth, bilberry, wild tulip, red poppy, plantain, winter

green, flower de luce, common daisy, crab-tree blossom, cowslip,

primrose, lords and ladies, pellitory of the wall, mallow, lily of

the valley, bramble, strawberry, flowering rush, wood spurge, wild

germander, dandelion, arrow-head. No. 8 monitor has on his post a set

of geometrical figures, illustrated by the representation of objects

either natural or artificial of the same shape; thus a triangle

illustrated by one side of a pyramid, a square, a pentagon, a hexagon,

a heptagon, an octagon, a nonagon, a decagon. No. 9 monitor has

another set of geometrical definitions on the same principle, as a

perpendicular line, a horizontal line, an oblique line, parallel

lines, curved lines, diverging or converging lines, an obtuse angle,

a circle. No. 10 a different set of geometrical shapes, viz.

sociles-triangles, scolene-triangles, rectangle, rhomb, rhomboid,

trapezoid, trapeziums, ellipse or oval. Having arrived at No. 11, the

class find here the European costumes, viz. Englishman, Frenchman,

Russian, Swiss, Italian, German, Scotchman, Welchman, Irishman, Turk,

Norwegian, Spaniard, Prussian, Icelander, Dutchman, Dane, Swede,

Portugese, Corsican, Saxon, Pole. No. 11 monitor delivers them to

No. 12, and there they may find pictures representing Negroes,

Otaheiteans, Highlanders, American Indians, East Indians, Laplanders,

Greeks, Persians, Sandwich Islanders, Turks, English, Chinese, Dutch,

Tartars.

To enter into a thorough explanation of the uses to which such lessons

as these may be applied would make a volume of itself, which at

present I have no time to write[A]; but it may be necessary, for the

sake of teachers generally, to shew the uses to which a few of them

may be applied, and leave it to their own ingenuity to go on is a

similar manner with the great variety of lessons we have of this

description, and which infants are quite competent to learn. Take the

European costumes as an example. When the children are thoroughly

acquainted with each of the representations, and can name them

themselves, or if too young to name them, can point them out if they

are named by the teacher, they may then be told that the Englishman is

born in a country called England, and that London is the capital, and

that capital means the greatest town or city. Care must be taken that

every thing is thoroughly explained, and that the pupils understand

the meaning of the terms used. You then windup this much by telling

the pupils that Englishman means the man, England the country, and

London the chief city; that England is the country they live in, if

you are teaching English children. That Frenchman means a man that

lives in a country called France, which is separated from England by

a part of the sea called the English channel; that Paris is the chief

town or capital. The teacher may here mention some remarkable events

connected with the history of France, and tell the children that

France and England have been often fighting against each other, but

that they are now at peace, and that we should be as kind and good to

Frenchmen as to any other men, because God likes to see all men live

friendly with each other. The children are then told that Russian

means a man living and born in Russia; that Russia is a country where

there is much ice and snow, and which is very cold; that Petersburgh

is the chief town, and that the people of Russia drive over the ice

and snow in sledges, which are carriages without wheels. That Swiss

means an inhabitant of a country named Switzerland, which is almost in

the centre of Europe, and has no sea near it; that it is a very pretty

country, full of beautiful lakes and mountains; that a lake is a very

great pond of water, and that mountains are very high rocky places,

and that the tops of the mountains in Switzerland are always covered

with snow; that the Swiss people are very brave, and fought very hard

for their freedom, that is, that no other people should be masters

over them; that the capital or chief town of Switzerland is Berne.

When the teacher comes to the Italian, he will say that he is an

inhabitant of a country called Italy, which is a very beautiful place;

that Rome is the capital, and was once the greatest city in the world.

In speaking of the Scotchman, the teacher may tell the children that

Scotland is not separated from England by any sea, but the three

countries called England, Scotland, and Wales, all form one island,

which is entirely surrounded by the sea; that the people who live in

the north, and cold parts of Scotland, are called Highlanders, and are

very brave and hardy; that Edinburgh is the capital. When the Welchman

is under the children's notice, the teacher will tell them that he

lives in a pretty country called Wales, which is joined to England,

that is, no sea divides them, that the chief town is London, although

London is in England and not Wales, because Wales has been governed by

the same king as England for many hundred years, and the eldest son of

the King of England is called Prince of Wales. When the teacher points

out the Irishman, he may tell his class that he lives in an island

near England, separated or divided from it by a part of the sea called

the Irish Channel; that Dublin is the chief city, and that Ireland is

governed by the same queen as England is. Speaking of the German, he

may say that he lives in a country of which the chief town is Vienna.

He may tell the children that the Turk lives in a country called

Turkey; that it is a very warm place, and its chief town is

Constantinople; that the Norwegian lives in a cold country called

Norway, whose chief town is Christiana; that the Spaniard lives in a

country called Spain, the chief town of which is Madrid; that many

of the oranges we eat come from Spain; that the Prussian lives in a

country called Prussia, the chief town of which is Berlin; that the

Icelander lives in a very cold place, called Iceland, which is an

island; that it is a place surrounded by water on every side; that

there is a great mountain in Iceland which is called a burning

mountain, because flames of fire often come out from the top of it.

That the Dutchman lives in a country called Holland; that the people

of that country are remarkable for being very clean, and that most of

the dolls which little English girls play with, are made by children

in Holland; that Amsterdam is the chief town or capital. The children

are told that the Dane lives in a country called Denmark. The teacher

may state that many hundred years back the Danes conquered England,

but that a brave English king, called Alfred, drove them all away

again; that Copenhagen is the capital or chief town; that the Swede

lives in a country called Sweden, and that Stockholm is the chief

town; that the Portuguese live in a country called Portugal, the

capital of which is Lisbon; that the Corsican lives in an island

called Corsica, the capital of which is Bastia; that the Saxon lives

in a country called Saxony, the chief town of which is Dresden. In

telling the children that the Pole lives in a country called Poland,

the chief town of which was Warsaw, the teacher should explain to them

that Poland has been conquered by the Russians, and taken from the

Poles, and shew how unjust this was of the Russians, and also how

the Poles fought very bravely to defend their country, but that the

Russians being stronger, and having larger armies, they were at last

overcome.

[Footnote A: I have since written a volume for juvenile schools; where

the principles are carried out. This can be had of the publisher.]

Having in this manner told the children as simply as possible, a

little about each country, the teacher should then tell the principal

rivers; thus: The principal rivers of England are, the Thames, the

Severn, the Trent, the Mersey. London, the capital of England, is is

built on the banks of the River Thames; and ships from all parts of

the world sail up this river, to bring us various things which we

could not get without sending to other countries for them; such as tea

and coffee and sugar. The principal rivers of France are, the Seine

and the Rhone; the Seine is the river on which the capital of France,

Paris, is built. The principal rivers of Russia are, the Wolga, the

Don, the Nieper, the Dwina, and the Vistula. The Wolga is a very great

river, being three thousand miles long. The Rhine, which is one of the

largest rivers in Europe, rises in Switzerland. The principal rivers

of Italy are, the Po, the Arno, and the Tiber; the chief town of

Italy, Rome, is built on the banks of the Tiber. Rome was once the

greatest city in the world. The principal rivers of Germany are, the

Danube, the Rhine, and the Elbe; of Scotland, the Clyde and Tweed; of

Ireland, the Shannon, Barrow, Boyne, Suire, and Nore. The capital of

Ireland, Dublin, is built on a small river called the Liffey. The

principal rivers of Turkey are, the Danube and the Don; of Spain, the

Guidalquiver; of Portugal, the Tagus, on which the chief town, Lisbon,

is built; and of Saxony, the Iser. In the same manner the children may

receive instruction fitted for their tender understanding, concerning

the other parts of the globe, always keeping in mind that, unless they

are made to comprehend thoroughly what is given to them, it is quite

useless to attempt to give them the lessons at all. When giving

the lessons on African costumes, the teacher should explain in the

simplest manner, that the Egyptian Bey is the chief governor of a

country in Africa called Egypt; that Africa is one of the four great

parts into which our earth is divided; that the Nile is a great river

flowing through Egypt, which, at certain times of the year, overflows

its banks, and that this fertilizes the ground, and causes the corn to

grow, which, but for this, would be withered with the sun, because

but very little rain ever falls in Egypt; that the cause of the Nile

overflowing its banks is, the great rains which fall in the countries

from whence the Nile flows: that the Ashantee is an inhabitant of

another country of Africa, where the people are very ignorant, and do

not know as much as the little children of an infant school: that the

Algerine lives in a part of Africa called Algiers: the people there

are very wicked and cruel, and used at one time to take the ships of

every other country that they met on the seas, and make slaves of the

people they found in them; but they cannot do so now, because the

French have conquered them, and taken all their ships from them: that

the Bedouin Arabs are people who rove about from place to place,

amongst the great sandy deserts of Africa, and rob travellers who are

passing over those deserts: the teacher should explain that these

deserts are very large places, covered with sand, and the sun is so

hot that no tree or shrub, or grass, will grow there, and there is no

water to be had, so that travellers carry water in leathern bottles on

the backs of camels; that camels are large animals, much larger than a

horse, which are very useful in those warm countries, because they can

carry very heavy loads on their backs, and go a great time without

water. The Copts woman should be pointed out to the children, and

notice should be taken of the large veil before her face. The Mameluke

should be pointed out as belonging to a fierce tribe of soldiers. When

speaking of the natives of Morocco, it should be mentioned that the

Moors at one time had possession of Spain; that the Maltese is a

native of an island called Malta; that Cairo (a picture of a native

of which is in the lesson) is the chief city of Egypt. That the

Bosjesman, native of Coronna, native of Namacqua, Caffree, native of

Tamaka and of Ebo, belong to the savage nations of Africa, of which

but little is known, who are of a black colour, and go with very

little clothes on them, because the country is so warm.

From the lesson supposed to be at No. 12 lesson-post, a good deal of

information may be given. The teacher may be thus supposed to address

the children, pointing to each picture, as he describes it.

Little children, this is a picture of negroes: they live in Africa,

but are often stolen from their own country to be made slaves of.

Africa is a very hot part of the world, and the poor negroes are

black, and have short black woolly hair, something like the hair on a

black sheep; but we must not laugh at them for this; it was God who

made them as well as he made you; and those poor negroes are very mild

and quiet people, and like to amuse themselves by singing and dancing.

You see the negroes in this picture; they are carrying a black lady in

a kind of basket, called a palanquin: a pole goes through this, and

they hold it on their shoulders. The next picture represents some of

the people who live in a country called Otaheite; they are strong,

stout people, and very mild and friendly. They are not black like the

negroes; their complexion is of a pale brown, with black eyes and very

handsome white teeth. The next picture represents Scotch Highlanders:

they live in the cold parts of Scotland; they are very strong and

healthy, and able to bear cold and hanger very well. They are fond of

playing on the bagpipes. This is a picture of American Indians: they

live in America, and are of a reddish colour; they build their huts in

the thickest forests, as far from the white men as they can. The next

is a picture of East Indians: their country is in the warmest part of

Asia, and from it comes a great many beautiful things, such as ladies

wear for shawls and dresses; there are a great many people in the East

Indies, and twenty-five millions are subject to the Queen of England.

The Laplanders live in a very cold country, called Lapland, in which

the ground is covered with snow all the year round; they are very

happy notwithstanding, for God gives every people means to be happy,

if they are good and love him; they have nice little huts to live in,

and sledges to travel with, which are drawn by rein-deer--we will read

about the rein-deer by and by. The Laplanders are kind to strangers,

and are very brave, although they are the smallest people in the

world.

This is a picture of Greeks: they were once a very great and powerful

people, but afterwards the Turks conquered them; they have now,

however, a king of their own.

The Persians, of whom this is a picture, live in a country of Asia

called Persia, from whence the most beautiful silks, carpets, leather,

gold and silver lace, and pearls, are brought. The Persian women are

very handsome, and wear the most beautiful clothes of any women in the

world--we should not like them the better for this, for handsome faces

and fine clothes will not make people good or happy, unless they try

to be so themselves.

This is a picture of the natives of the Sandwich islands: they are

a very friendly people, and live together without fighting or

quarrelling; they make mats and canoes, and the women make cloth.

The Turks (this is a picture of some of them) are very fine handsome

people; they wear very long beards; and they shave their heads and

wear white turbans instead of hair; they are very fond of drinking

coffee and smoking from great long pipes.

The English are represented in this picture: you are English

children--England is a very great country, and the Queen of England

has many ships in every part of the world; and a great many places,

many thousand miles away, belong to England.

This picture represents the Swiss: they are a very brave, honest, good

people, and their country is very beautiful; a great many clocks and

watches are made in Switzerland.

This is a picture of the Chinese: they wear very curious dresses; and

the ladies in China squeeze their feet very much, in order to make

them small, which they think a great beauty. Tea comes from China, and

is the leaf of a small plant.

This picture represents the Dutch: they are a very clean and

industrious people, and the little children there are never idle.

The last picture represents the Tartars: they live in Asia, and wander

about without any fixed dwelling, not staying in one place longer than

while it gives them food for themselves and their horses, of which

they have a great many. Horses are wild in Tartary.

The reader will at once perceive what a feast is afforded to the young

mind in these object lessons; the objects are accurately copied from

nature, and the costumes from the best sources, so that the infant

mind is expanded by viewing a proper representation of the real thing

through the fit organ, the eye. It is astonishing what infants will

learn through the sense of seeing, and it is remarkable that our

systems of education for young and old, should not have been founded

on a knowledge of the high importance of this medium for communication

and information; the youngest child may learn to distinguish one

object from another to an endless variety, and I could produce

children who could point me out a thousand objects, if I called them

by their proper names, who perhaps could not themselves name twenty of

the objects out of the thousand; by this it will be seen we first give

them the object, and language itself follows in due course.

Whenever a clear idea or notion is given to the mind by a picture or

object, it is then easy to impart the information that is naturally

connected with it; and this will then be most strongly retained,

according to the law of association, which is one of the most

important principles to be kept in view in imparting instruction to

both young and old. Lead on FROM \_something known\_ TO \_something

unknown\_, is a golden rule,--a most valuable axiom that all teachers

should ever bear constantly in mind. What important lessons may be

given in a field, wood, or forest! How much better is the thing itself

for a lesson, than the representation of it! And what a class of

teachers are wanted for this work? Yet sure I am that in due time the

Great God will raise such up from amongst his people, to the glory of

His name, and the benefit of succeeding generations. May greater minds

than the humble writer of this, be called to work in this blessed

vineyard for the good of the species, and for the diminution of crime;

and, oh! may they be able to dive into the recesses of the wonderful

works of God, to grapple with the difficulties therein found, and

bring to light some of the hidden mysteries, for the instruction of

mankind!

When this book was first written, thirty-two years ago, some of the

ideas were universally scouted, yet I have lived to see the day that

the very men who sneered at the views first made known in this book,

adopt precisely the same principles, and even go much further that I

ever intended, or even thought suitable for infant minds, and quietly

puff this off as a new discovery in infant training; so much the

better, portions of the public will hear them, and they would not

listen to me; and if the end is answered, it is of little consequence

through what means that end is gained. It is satisfactory to know that

the principles first developed in the infant plan are found equally

applicable to older children, and I have had the pleasure of seeing

those principles carried out in many schools throughout the country,

too numerous to mention individually.

It will be seen from what has been said that the plan of the children

marching from one post to the other, is the very thing for infants, as

exercising and developing their locomotive powers, a thing exceedingly

desirable for young children. The great error of the old infant

system, or in other words, the dame-school plan, was the keeping the

pupils rivetted to their seats; here they are marching from one place

to another, and get ting food for every sense. Take as another example

the picture of the trades; the monitor says to his little pupils as

they come up. What does a fishmonger sell, the answer is, fishes of

many sorts, such as salmon, cod, herring, and mackerel. Q. What does a

mason do? A. Cut stones into their proper shapes, polish some sorts,

and cut ornaments on others. Q. What does a hatter sell? A. Hats, for

men, women, and little children. Q. What does a cooper do? A. Mend

casks and make them. Q. What does a butcher mean? A. One that sells

beef, mutton, pork, &c. Q. What do they call butchers in Scotland? A.

Fleshers. Q. What does a blacksmith mean? A. One that makes different

things from iron, and sometimes shoes horses. Q. What does a fruiterer

mean? A. A person that sells all sorts of fruits, such as apples,

pears, plums, cherries, gooseberries, strawberries, &c. Q. What does

a distiller mean? A. A man that makes rum, brandy, whiskey, and other

liquors. Q. What does a grocer mean? A. A man that sells tea, coffee,

sugar, spices, and many other things. Q. What does a carpenter mean?

A. A man that cuts up wood, makes benches; it was a carpenter made our

gallery. Q. What does a turner mean? A. A man who makes snuff-boxes,

bed-posts; It was a turner who made the balls on our arithmeticon. Q.

What does a tallow-chandler mean? A. A man that buys and sells candles

of different sorts. Q. What does milliner mean? A. A person that makes

ladies' caps, tippets, and things for little children. Q. What does

a dyer mean? A. A man that dyes cloths of different colours. Q. What

does a druggist mean? A. One that sells drugs of different kinds, such

as nutgalls, alum, bark, &c. Q. What does wheelwright mean? A. A man

that makes carts, wheelbarrows, &c. Q. What does a shoe-maker do? A.

Makes shoes for men and women and little boys and girls. Q. What does

a printer do? A. Print lessons for little children to read; newspapers

and books for men to read. Q. What does a coach-maker make? A.

Coaches, gigs, omnibuses, cabs, and things of that sort. Q. What does

a bookseller do? A. Sells books of different sorts, pictures, paper,

sealing-wax, &c. Q. What does a bricklayer do? A. Builds walls, the

brick part of houses, &c. Q. What does a linen-draper do? A. Sells

linen to make shirts, printed calico to make frocks, and many other

things of that kind. Q. What does a cabinet-maker do? A. Makes tables,

chairs, and presses, and other things to furnish houses with. Q. What

does a brewer do? A. Makes ale and porter. Q. What does a painter

mean? A. One who paints insides of houses, doors, window shutters, and

such things. Q. What does a bookbinder do? A. Puts covers on books.

These lessons being all supplied by me, more explanation in this place

may be unnecessary, but as a further guide to teachers of infant

schools, I subjoin a synopsis of a week's course of instruction which

has been adopted in many schools.

\* \* \* \* \*

SYNOPSIS OF A WEEK'S INSTRUCTION.

TIME.--\_Mornings\_. School to assemble at nine o'clock, and to leave at

twelve.

\_Afternoons\_. School to assemble at two o'clock, and to leave at four

in winter, and five in summer.

MONDAY.

\_Morning\_. When assembled, to offer the appointed prayer, after which

a hymn is to be sung; then slates and pencils are to be delivered to

the children; after which they are to proceed with their letters and

spelling. At half-past ten o'clock to play, and at eleven o'clock to

assemble in the gallery, and repeat the picture lessons on natural

history after the monitor in the rostrum.

\_Afternoon\_. Begin with prayer and hymn as in the morning; picture

lessons on Scripture history to be repeated from the lesson-post, and

to be questioned on them afterwards in the gallery.

TUESDAY.

\_Morning\_. Usual prayer and hymn. Letters and spelling from the

lesson-posts. Play. Gallery; repeat the addition and subtraction

tables.

\_Afternoon\_. Prayer and hymn. Multiplication table; the monitor asking

the question, and the children answering. Reading lessons. Play.

Gallery; numeration and spelling with brass figures and letters.

WEDNESDAY.

\_Morning\_. Prayer and hymn. Letters and spelling. Play. Gallery;

master to teach geometrical figures and musical characters.

\_Afternoon\_. Prayer and hymn. Practice pence and shilling tables.

Play. Gallery; master to give lessons on arithmetic. Extempore

teaching on men and things, &c. &c.

THURSDAY.

\_Morning\_. Prayer and hymn. Letters and spelling. Division, weights,

measures, and time, from the rostrum. Play. Gallery; same lessons as

Monday morning.

\_Afternoon\_. Prayer and hymn. From the lesson-posts epitome of

geometry and natural history. Gallery; brass letters and figures.

Extempore teaching on men and things, taking care that all such

teaching shall be illustrated by substances.

FRIDAY.

\_Morning\_. Prayer and hymn. Letters and spelling. Tables in

arithmetic, at the master's discretion. Play. Gallery; lessons on

geography, maps, globes, &c.

\_Afternoon\_. Prayer and hymn. Scripture pictures on the lesson-posts,

and questions on them in the gallery.

SATURDAY.

\_Morning\_. Prayer and hymn. Letters and spelling. Tables of arithmetic

from the rostrum. Play. Gallery; lessons on the transposition frame,

and on geometry from the brass instrument. Religious instruction

should have a prominent part in the business of every day, and

especially so every Saturday morning.

N.B. If visitors wish any particular lessons to be gone through, and

the children appear disposed, the master is not bound to adhere to

the above rules, neither at any other time, if the children appear

particularly disinclined.

\* \* \* \* \*

There are a few other matters, on which, before concluding this

chapter, I must speak, as claiming the attention of infant school

conductors. First attend to

CLEANLINESS.

Although we have referred to this before, yet, as it is of

considerable importance not only to the children but to those around

them, it may not be amiss to take up a little more of the reader's

time, and to state the different plans that have been devised, in

order to make the children as clean as possible. In one case, a trough

was erected, and a pipe provided to convey the water into it; but

before it had been up a month, it was found, that instead of answering

the end intended, it had quite a contrary effect; for the children

dabbled in the trough, and made themselves ten times worse than they

were, by wetting themselves from head to foot; besides which, it

frequently caused them to take cold, of which the parents complained.

Some took their children away without notice; others came and gave

the master what they called "\_a good set down\_." It was, therefore,

thought necessary to forbid the children washing themselves, and

to wash all that came dirty. But it was soon found that the dirty

children increased so fast, that it required one person's time

to attend to them; besides which, it had another bad effect, it

encouraged the parents in laziness; and they told me, when I

complained of their sending the children to school dirty, "That indeed

they had no time to wash their children; there was a trough in the

school for that purpose, and the persons who had charge of the school

were paid for it, and ought to do it." In consequence of this, the

trough was taken away, and it was represented to the parents, that it

was their duty to keep their children clean; that unless they did so,

they would be sent home to be washed; and if they persisted in sending

them without being washed, there would be no alternative left but to

dismiss them from the school altogether. This offended some of the

parents, and they took their children out of the school, but many

afterwards petitioned to have them readmitted. I mention this merely

to prevent others, who may be concerned in the establishment of infant

schools, from incurring an unnecessary expense, and to shew that the

parents will value the school equally as well if you make them wash

their children, as if you did it for them.

The plan that we have acted upon to enforce cleanliness, is as

follows: As soon as the children are assembled in the school, the

monitors cause them to hold out their hands, with their heads up; they

then inspect their hands and their faces, and all those who are dirty

are desired to stand out, to be examined by the master, who will

easily perceive whether they have been washed that morning; if not,

they are sent home to be washed, and if the mother has any sense of

propriety, she will take care that it shall not often occur. But it

may be found, that some have been washed, and been playing with the

dirt, when coming to school, which some children are very apt to do;

in this case they have a pat on the hand, which generally cures them.

There is much trouble at first, to keep the children quite clean; some

of their parents are habitually dirty, and in such cases the children

will be like them; these will, therefore, require more trouble than

others, but they will soon acquire cleanly habits, and, with proper

management, become as cleanly as any of the other children. As soon

as a child is taken into the school the monitor shows him a certain

place, and explains to him, that when he wants to go into the yard, he

is to ask him, and he will accompany him there. Of course there are

separate accommodations for each sex, and such prudential arrangements

made as the case requires, but which it is unnecessary further to

particularize.[A]

[Footnote A: This is a subject of the highest importance in moral

training, and deserve the serious attention of committees as well as

teachers: inattention to these matters, may demoralize every child

that enters the school. In many schools throughout the country I have

seen great want of attention to this subject, the seats were too high,

the circular holes too large, causing fear on the part of the infants,

and also bad habits. The seats should be the same height as the seats

in the school--six inches, and nine inches high, the diameter of the

holes seven inches and nine inches--the teachers should constantly

visit these places, inculcate habits of delicacy and cleanliness.

Such habits formed in childhood are never forgotten. Superfine

dressy teachers, will be too proud, and too high, to attend to these

things--but the judicious mother or matron will at once see their

importance and act accordingly--"as the twig is bent the tree's

inclined."]

2. NEVER FRIGHTEN CHILDREN.

It is common for many persons to threaten to put children into the

black hole, or to call the sweep to take them away in his bag, when

they do not behave as they ought; but the ill effects of this mode of

proceeding may be perceived from the following fact. I knew a child,

who had been to one of those schools where the children of mechanics

are usually sent, called dames' schools, which was kept by an elderly

woman, who, it seems, had put this child into the coal-hole, and told

him, that unless he was a good boy, the black man would come and take

him away; this so frightened the child, that he fell into a violent

fit, and never afterwards could bear the sight of this woman. On the

mother getting the child admitted into our school, she desired me to

be very gentle with him, relating to me all the above story, except

that the child had had a fit. About a fortnight after the admission of

the child, he came running one day into the school, exclaiming, "I'll

be a good boy, master! master! I'll be a good boy." As soon as he

caught sight of me, he clung round, and grasped me with such violence,

that I really thought the child was mad; in a few minutes after this

he went into strong convulsions, and was such a dreadful spectacle,

that I thought the child would die in my arms. In this state he

remained for about twenty minutes, and I fully expected he would be

carried out of the school a corpse. I sent for the mother, but on her

arrival I perceived she was less alarmed than myself; she immediately

said, the child was in a fit, and that I had frightened him into it. I

told her that she was mistaken; that the child had only just entered

the school, and I was ignorant of the cause of his fright; but several

of my little scholars soon set the matter to rest, by stating the

particulars of the fright, which they observed when coming to school.

It seems that a man was in the street, who sweeps chimneys with a

machine, and just as the little fellow passed him, he called out,

"Sweep;" this so alarmed the child, that he thought the man was going

to take him, and was affected by his fears in the way I have stated.

The child, however, getting better, and the mother hearing what the

children said, begged my pardon for having accused me wrongfully, and

then told me the whole particulars of his first fright and the woman

and the coal-hole. I had the greatest difficulty imaginable to

persuade him, that a sweep was a human being, and that he loved little

children as much as other persons. After some time, the child got

somewhat the better of his fears, but not wholly so. He had but one

fit afterwards. This shews how improper it is to confine children by

themselves, or to threaten them in the manner described. Many persons

continue nervous all their lives through such treatment, and are so

materially injured, that they are frightened at their own shadow.

It is also productive of much mischief to talk of mysteries, ghosts,

and hobgoblins, before children, which many persons are too apt to

do. Some deal so much in the marvellous, that I really believe they

frighten many children out of their senses. I recollect, when I was a

child, hearing such stories, till I have actually been afraid to look

behind me. How many persons are frightened at such a little creature

as a mouse, because the nature of that little creature has not been

explained to them in their infancy. Indeed, children should have all

things shewn them, if possible, that they are likely to meet with: and

above all, it should be impressed upon their minds, that if they meet

with no injury from the living, it is most certain the dead will never

hurt them, and that he who fears God, need have no other fear. It is

also common with many persons, to put a disobedient child into a room

by itself. I cannot approve of this method, as the child is frequently

frightened into quietness without improving his temper in the

least; if it be day time it is not so bad, but if it be dark, the

consequences are often serious, and materially injure the constitution

of the child. The more I reflect upon this subject, the more do I see

its impropriety. I would rather use the rod, in moderation, and mercy.

I am sure it is better for the disobedient and unruly child, and more

according to the dealings of the Creator with us all. I can truly say

my punishments, which have not been slight, have done me good. As

children we cannot see these things; as men and thinkers, we can. Yea!

and kiss the rod.

3. GUARD AGAINST FORGETFULNESS.

The circumstance I am about to mention, shews how necessary it is to

teach by example as well as precept. Many of the children were in the

habit of bringing marbles, tops, whistles, and other toys, to the

school, which often caused much disturbance; for they would play with

them instead of attending to their lessons, and I found it necessary

to forbid the children from bringing anything of the kind. After

giving notice, therefore, two or three times in the school, I told

them that if any of them brought such things, they would be taken away

from them. In consequence of this, several things fell into my hands,

which I did not always think of returning, and, among other things, a

whistle belonging to a little boy. The child asked me for it as he

was going home, but having several visitors at the time, put him off,

telling him not to plague me, and he went home. I had forgotten the

circumstance altogether, but it appears the child had not; for some

time after, while I was lecturing the children upon the necessity of

telling truth, and on the wickedness of stealing, the little fellow

approached me, and said, "\_Please, sir, you stole my whistle\_." "Stole

your whistle!" said I; "did I not give it you again?" "No, teacher,

I asked you for it, and you would not give it to me." I stood

self-convicted, being accused in the middle of my lecture, before all

the children, and really at a loss to know what excuse to make, for

I had mislaid the whistle, and could not return it to the child.

I immediately gave the child a halfpenny, and said all I could to

persuade the children that it was not my intention to keep it.

However, I am satisfied that this trifling mistake of mine did more

harm than I was able to repair during some time; for if we wish to

teach children to be honest, we should never take anything from them

without returning it again. Indeed, persons having charge of children

can never be too cautious, and should not, on any account whatever,

break a promise; for experience has taught me that most children have

good memories, and if you once promise a thing and do not perform it,

they will pay very little attention to what you say afterwards.

4. OBSERVE PUNCTUALITY.

A little girl, whose mother was dead, was often absent from school.

She was never at a loss for excuses, but from their frequency I was at

last induced to suspect their truth. None of the children knew where

she resided; so I was obliged to send the eldest boy in the school

home with her, to ascertain whether or not her stories were true. I

gave the boy positive directions to make haste back; but, much to my

surprise, I saw no more of him for six hours. When he returned, he

told me that the little girl refused to shew him where she lived; and

had taken him so far, that he at last determined to leave her, but

could not find his way back sooner. In the evening I went myself,

according to the direction I had entered in the admission-book, but

found that the family were removed, and the persons in the house could

not tell me where they had gone to reside. I saw nothing of the child

for the five following days, when a woman who had the care of her and

her little brother in arms, came to inquire the reason why the girl

came home at such irregular hours, stating, that sometimes she came

home at half-past eleven, at other times not till two, and sometimes

at three in the afternoon: in short, often an hour after school was

over. I told her that the child was frequently absent, and that it was

five days since I had seen her. The woman appeared quite surprised,

and told me, that she had always sent the child to school at the

regular time; that when she came home before the usual hour, she said

her governess had sent all the children home a little sooner; and if

she came home after the time, then she said that there had been some

ladies visiting the school, and that the children had been kept for

their inspection.

Here I must acknowledge, that I have frequently detained children a

little while after school-hours, when we have had visitors, but since

it furnishes the children with an excuse for going home late, I think

it would be better to discontinue the practice; and would hint to

those ladies and gentlemen who feel inclined to visit such schools,

that they should come between the hours of nine and twelve in the

forenoon, or two and four in the afternoon. I have only to observe,

that the child I have been speaking of came to the school very

regularly afterwards.

There is another subject too important to be passed without notice; I

mean the punctual attendance of the pupils. If the teachers are firm,

and determined, to secure this, \_it can be done\_. In Ireland, where

the value of time and punctuality is least understood, the thing was

accomplished,--whilst no better lesson can be given to those who have

to work for their daily bread, than punctuality. If a child cannot

attend school at nine, how can it attend work at six in the morning?

Be firm, and the object is gained.

5. BE STRICTLY ACCURATE IN YOUR EXPRESSIONS.

One day when the children were assembled in the gallery, having none

of their usual lessons at hand, I took from my pocket a piece of

paper, and promised them that if they would answer me every question

I put concerning the paper, I would at last make a paper boat. I

proceeded in the following manner: "What is this?" "What colour?"

"What is its use?" "How made!" "What made of?" &c. These questions

being answered according to their different views, and having folded

the paper into a variety of forms, and obtained their ideas upon such

forms, I proceeded to fulfil my promise of forming it into the shape

of a boat; but the children, seeing me at a loss, exclaimed, "Please,

sir, you can't do it;" which proved the fact, as I had forgotten the

plan, and was obliged to make the confession. "Then, sir," rejoined

one of the boys, "you should not have promised."

In the course of my observations I had frequently enjoined the

children to make every possible use of their thinking powers, but it

appears I had at the same time forgotten to make use of my own, and

consequently had been betrayed into a promise which I was not able to

perform.

I remember some other instances:

One of the children happened to kick another. The injured party

complained to the person who then had the charge of the school,

saying, "Please, sir, this boy kicked me." It being time for the

children to leave school, the master waved his hand towards the gate

through which the children pass, thoughtlessly saying, at the same

time, "Kick away;" meaning that the complainant was to take no more

notice of the affair, but go home. The complainant, however, returning

to the other child, began kicking him, and received some kicks

himself. A friend was present, and seeing two children kicking each

other, he very naturally inquired the reason. "Please, sir," replied

the children, "master told us!" "Master told you," says the gentleman,

"that cannot be; I'll ask him." He accordingly inquired into the truth

of the affair, and received for answer, "Certainly not." "Yes," said

the child, "you did, sir; did not I tell you just now that a boy

kicked me?" "Yes," says the master, "you did." "Then, please sir,"

says the child, "you told me to go and kick away!" The master

immediately recollected that he had said so.

This fact shews how improper it is to say one thing to a child and

mean another. These children were under the influence of obedience,

\_and in the light of truth\_, and being in that light, they could see

from no other, and very naturally concluded the master meant what he

had said.

One day some visitors requested I would call out a class of the

children to be examined. Having done so, I asked the visitors in what

they would wish the children to be examined; at the same time stating

that they might hear the children examined in natural history,

Scriptural history, arithmetic, spelling, geography, or geometry. They

choose the latter, and I proceded to examine the children accordingly;

beginning with straight lines. Having continued this examination for

about half an hour, we proceeded to enter into particulars respecting

triangles; and having discoursed on the difference between isosceles

triangles and scalene triangles, I observed that an acute isosceles

triangle had all its angles acute, and proceeded to observe that a

right-angled scalene triangle had all its angles acute. The children

immediately began to laugh, for which I was at a loss to account, and

told them of the impropriety of laughing at me. One of the children

immediately replied, "Please, sir, do you know what we were laughing

at?" I replied in the negative. "Then, sir," says the boy, "I will

tell you. Please, sir, you have made a blunder." I, thinking I had

not, proceeded to defend myself, when the children replied, "Please,

sir, you convict yourself." I replied, "How so?" "Why," says the

children, "you said a right-angled triangle had one right angle, and

that all its angles are acute. If it has one right angle, how can all

its angles be acute?" I soon perceived the children were right, and

that I was wrong. Here, then, the reader may perceive the fruits of

teaching the children to think, inasmuch as it is shewn that children

of six years of age and under were able to refute their tutor. If

children had been taught to think many years ago, error would have

been much more easily detected, and its baneful influence would not

have had that effect upon society which at this day unfortunately we

are obliged to witness.

At another time I was lecturing the children in the gallery on the

subject of cruelty to animals; when one of the little children

observed, "Please, sir, my big brother catches the poor flies, and

then sticks a pin through them, and makes them draw the pin along the

table." This afforded me an excellent opportunity of appealing to

their feelings on the enormity of this offence, and, among other

things, I observed, that if the poor fly had been gifted with the

powers of speech like their own, it probably would have exclaimed,

\_while dead\_, as follows:--"You naughty child, how can you think of

torturing me so? Is there not room in the world for you and me? Did I

ever do you any harm? Does it do you any good to put me in such pain?

Why do you do it, you are big enough to know better? How would you

like a man to run a piece of wire through your body, and make you draw

things about? Would you not cry at the pain? Go, then, you wicked boy,

and learn to leave off such cruel actions." Having finished, one of

the children replied, "How can any thing speak if it is dead?" "Why,"

said I, "supposing it could speak." "You meant to say, sir," was the

rejoinder, "\_dying\_ instead of \_dead\_."

It will, of course be understood that in this case I purposely misused

a word, and the children being taught to think, easily detected it.

6. WATCH AGAINST THE ENTRANCE OF DISEASE.

It may, probably, be considered presumption in me, to speak of the

diseases of children, as this more properly belongs to the faculty;

but let it be observed, that my pretension is not to cure the diseases

that children are subject to, but only to prevent those which are

infectious from spreading. I have found that children between the ages

of two and seven years, are subject to the measles, hooping

cough, fever, ophthalmia, ringworm, scald-head, and in very poor

neighbourhoods, the itch--and small-pox. This last is very rare, owing

to the great encouragement given to vaccination; and were it not for

the obstinacy of many of the poor, I believe it would be totally

extirpated. During the whole of the time I superintended a school, I

heard of only three children dying of it, and those had never been

vaccinated. I always made a point of inquiring, on the admission of

a child, whether this operation had been performed, and, if not, I

strongly recommended that it should be. If parents spoke the truth, I

had but few children in the school who had not been vaccinated: this

accounts, therefore, for having lost but three children through the

small-pox.

The measles, however, I consider a very dangerous disorder, and

we lost a great many children by it, besides two of my own. It is

preceded by a violent cough, the child's eyes appear watery, and it

will also be sick. As soon as these symptoms are perceived, I would

immediately send the child home, and desire the parents to keep it

there for a few days, in order to ascertain if it have the measles,

and if so, it must be prohibited from returning to school until well.

This caution is absolutely necessary; as some parents are so careless,

that they will send their children when the measles are thick out upon

them.

The same may be said with respect to other diseases, for unless the

persons who have charge of the school attend to these things, the

parents will be glad to get their children out of the way, and will

send them, though much afflicted, without considering the ill-effects

that may be produced in the school. Whether such conduct in the

parents proceeds from ignorance or not, I am not able to say, but this

I know, that I have had many parents offer children for admission,

with all the diseases I have mentioned, and who manifested no

disposition to inform me of it. The number of children who may

be sick, from time to time, may be averaged at from twenty to

thirty-five, out of two hundred, we have never had less than twenty

absent on account of illness, and once or twice we had as many as

fifty.

Soon after I first took charge of the establishment, I found that

there were five or six children in the school who had the measles;

the consequence was, that it contaminated the whole school, and about

eight children died, one of my own being of that number. This induced

me to be very cautious in future, and I made a point of walking round

the school twice every day, in order to inspect the children; and

after the adoption of this plan, we did not have the measles in the

school.

The hooping-cough is known, of course, by the child hooping; but I

consider it the safest plan to send all children home that have any

kind of cough; this will cause the mother to come and inquire the

reason why the child is sent home; and it can be ascertained from her

whether the child has had the hooping-cough or not.

With respect to fever, I generally find the children appear chilly

and cold, and not unfrequently they are sick. I do not, however, feel

myself competent to describe the early symptoms of this disorder, but

the best way to prevent its gaining ground in the school is to send

all the children home who appear the least indisposed.

As to the ophthalmia, I can describe the symptoms of that disease,

having had it myself, together with the whole of my family. It

generally comes in the left eye first, and causes a sensation as if

something was in the eye, which pricks and shoots, and produces great

pain: the white of the eye will appear red, or what is usually called

blood-shot; this, if not speedily attended to, will cause blindness;

I have had several children that have been blind with it for several

days. In the morning, the patients are not able to unclose their

eyes for some time after they are awake. As soon as I observe

these appearances, I immediately send the child home; for I have

ascertained, beyond a doubt, that the disease is contagious, and if a

child be suffered to remain with it in the school, the infection will

speedily spread among the children.

As children are frequently apt to burn or scald themselves, I will

here insert a method for adoption in such cases. It is very simple,

yet infallible; at least, I have never known it to fail. It is no

other than the application of common writing ink. One of my own

children burnt its hand dreadfully, and was cured by immediately

washing it all over with that liquid. Several children burnt their

hands against the pipe that was connected with the stove in the

school-room, and were cured by the same means. One boy, in particular,

took hold of a hot cinder that fell from the fire, and it quite singed

his hand; I applied ink to it, and it was cured in a very short time.

Let any one, therefore, who may happen to receive a burn, apply ink

to it immediately, and he will soon witness the good effects of the

application. Thirty-three years' experience has proved to me that

\_stoves\_ in any school are a nuisance: the common fire place is better

than heating with hot air, hot water, or stoves of any description

that I have yet seen. The grate being low, as at railway stations, is

an improvement and answers well. Had theorists seen the white faced

dull eyed children that I have seen, where stoves are used, and felt

the head aches which I have felt, they would soon banish them from

every school.

7. NEVER CORRECT A CHILD IN ANGER.

8. NEVER OVERLOOK A FAULT.

9. IN ALL THINGS SET BEFORE THE CHILDREN AN EXAMPLE WORTHY OF

IMITATION.

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I should recommend the adoption of the following resolutions of an

intelligent and zealous committee, and that a copy of them be sent to

each master and mistress.

"That as this infant school is established for the express purpose of

carrying into the fullest effect the system of Mr. Wilderspin, which

the committee are convinced is practicable and excellent, the master

be desired to make himself perfectly acquainted with it, in its

physical, mental, and moral bearings, by a study of Mr. Wilderspin's

works on the subject, and particularly of the last and most complete

edition.

"That the rules as printed be strictly adhered to by the master.

That children who are ill, having hooping-cough, ringworm, or other

contagious disease, be refused admission until perfectly restored.

That the business of the school begin precisely at the time appointed,

and that during the shortest days the signals for leaving school be

not given till four o'clock precisely.

"That except during the time given, according to the system, to play,

the whole be occupied by the mistress as well as the master in the

instruction of the children, and that the plan laid down in Mr.

Wilderspin's book, be followed as nearly as possible, so that the

apparatus already provided may be gradually brought into action, and

the children have all the advantages of the system; the master and

mistress so dividing their labour that all the children may be

occupied.

"That the master and mistress pay the utmost attention to the children

learning to read.

"That when a child is absent a week, the master state the cause to the

treasurer, to prevent mistakes as to the payments, and that when a

child declines attending or is excluded, immediate notice be given to

the secretary of the ladies' committee.

"That the master be desired to go on with the business of the school

when visitors who are members of the committee are present, and only

to pay particular attention to those who may be strangers, and who

require information.

"That all applications from the master be made to the committee

through the secretary.

"That all orders from the committee to the teachers be conveyed

through the same channel."

CHAPTER IX.

GALLERY TEACHING--MORAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

\_Original intention of the gallery--What lessons are adapted for

it--Its misapplication--Selection of teachers--Observations--Gallery

lessons an a feather--A spider--A piece of bog-turf--A piece of

coal--Observations on the preceding lessons--Scripture lessons in

the gallery--The finding of Moses--Christ with the doctors--Moral

training--Its neglect in most schools--Should be commenced in

infancy--Beneficial effects of real moral culture--Ignorance of

teachers--The gallery most useful in moral training--Specimen of a

moral lesson--Illustrations of moral culture--Anecdotes--Simpson on

moral education--Observations--Hints to teachers\_.

There is no part of the infant system which has been more

misunderstood, than the system of giving lessons in the gallery; and

hence I have thought it necessary to devote a larger space to the

subject, than I did in the former editions of this work. The gallery

was originally intended by me, to give the children such lessons as

appealed directly to the senses, either orally or by representative

objects: thus the teaching arithmetic by the frame and balls, inasmuch

as it appealed to the eye as well as to the understanding, was

suitable for a gallery lesson. The same observations hold good with

respect to a Scripture picture, or the representation of an animal,

a tree, or any object that can be presented to the eye. We have also

found it very useful in teaching the catechism, or anything that is to

be committed to memory, and this part of our plan has proved so useful

and successful, that it has been adopted in many schools for older

children of both sexes, I mean in the Normal schools of Glasgow and

Edinburgh, the Corporation Schools of Liverpool, and the government

Model Schools at Dublin. In the two latter the arrangements, both in

the fittings up of the play-grounds, galleries, and school-rooms, were

made under my especial inspection, and I have no doubt that the use of

the gallery, when it becomes more generally known in large schools,

will become universal.

The taught should see the face of the teacher in these lessons, and

the teacher should see the face of the taught: it establishes a

sympathy between both to the advantage of each. The face is the index

to the mind, and at times shews the intention, even without words.

Some animals can read this index: the horse, the dog, the elephant,

and many of the higher order of animals. Children can always read the

countenance of the sincere, the wise, and the good. Yea! mere infants

can. Reader! Don't smile! were this the time and place, I could

demonstrate these opinions by \_facts\_. This is not a book for

controversy and metaphysical disquisition; but for use to teachers.

When the children and teachers see each other, as in the gallery, the

effect is highly beneficial. This may be proved by any teacher. As to

the cause for this effect, it would be out of place to argue it here.

I therefore simply state it is true. Sympathy is a power destined to

be of use in teaching, and hereafter will be better understood.

Many friends to infant education, and casual visitors, having found

these erections in infant schools, have concluded that the children

should always be sitting on them, which is a fatal error, and deprives

the children of that part of the system which legislates for the

exercise of their locomotive powers, such as the spelling and reading

lessons, and the method of teaching object lessons, as described in

another part of this work: the consequence has been, that the schools

have become mere parrot-schools, and the children are restless and

inattentive. And this has not been the only evil that has attended a

misapplication of the gallery; for the teachers, for want of knowing

the system properly, have been at a loss how to occupy the time of the

children, and scores of teachers have ruined their own constitutions,

and also the constitutions of some of the children, by the perpetual

talking and singing, which, I am sorry to say, too many consider to be

the sum total of the system: and I may state here, that the children

should never be more than one hour at a time, or, at most two hours,

during the day, in the gallery. All beyond this is injurious to the

teacher, and doubly so to the little pupils. The forenoon is always

the best time for gallery lessons; the teacher's mind is more clear,

and the minds of the children are more receptive. After the children

have taken their dinner they should be entertained with the object

lessons, a small portion of spelling and reading, and the rest of the

afternoon should be devoted to moral and physical teaching in the

play-ground, if the weather will at all permit it. The more you

rob your children of their physical education to shew off their

intellectual acquirements, the more injury you do their health and

your own; and in the effort to do too much, you violate the laws of

nature, defeat your own object, and make the school a hot-bed of

precocity, instead of a rational infants' school for the training

and educating infants. I have been blamed, by writers on the infant

system, for that which I never did, and never recommended; I have been

made answerable for the errors and mis-conceptions of others, who have

not troubled themselves to read my writings; and, in their anxiety

to produce something new and original, have strayed from the very

essential parts of the plan, and on this account I am charged by

several writers with being unacquainted with the philosophy of my own

system. I thought three-and-thirty years ago that if I could arrest

public attention to the subject, it was as much as could be expected.

I knew very well at that time that a dry philosophical detail would

neither be received or read. My object was to appeal to the senses of

the public by doing the thing in every town where practicable. By this

method I succeeded, where the other would have failed, but it by no

means followed that I was unacquainted with the philosophy of my

own plans, merely because I preferred the doing of the thing to the

writing about it. Believing, however, that the time has now arrived,

and that the public mind is better prepared than it was then, I have

thought I might venture to go a little more into detail, in order to

remove some well founded objections, which, but for this reason, would

not have existed. The infant mind, like a tender plant, requires to

be handled and dealt with carefully, for if it be forced and

injudiciously treated during the first seven years of its existence,

it will affect its whole constitution as long as it lives afterwards.

There are hundreds of persons who will not believe this, and those

persons will employ mere boys and girls to teach infants. Let them do

so if they please; I simply protest against it, and merely give it as

my opinion that it is highly improper to do so. If ever infant schools

are to become real blessings to the country, they must be placed under

the care of wise, discreet, and experienced persons, for no others

will be fit or able to develop and cultivate the infant faculties

aright. I have felt it necessary to make these remarks, because in

different parts of the country I have found mere children employed as

school-masters and school-mistresses, to the great detriment of the

young committed to their charge, and the dishonour of the country that

permits it. No wise man would put a mere child to break his colts;

none but a foolish one would employ an inexperienced boy to break in

his dogs; even the poultry and pigs would be attended by a person who

knew something about them; but almost any creature who can read and

write, and is acquainted with the first rules of arithmetic, is too

frequently thought a fit and proper person to superintend infants. I

know many instances of discarded servants totally unfit, made teachers

of infants, merely to put them in place; to the destruction of the

highest and most noble of God's creatures! which I contend infants

are. To expect that such persons can give gallery lessons as they

ought to be given, is expecting what will never, nor can take place.

The public must possess different views of the subject; more rational

ideas on the art of teaching must be entertained, and greater

remuneration must be given to teachers, and greater efforts made to

train and educate them, to fit them for the office, before any very

beneficial results can be seen; and it is to produce such results, and

a better tone of feeling on the subject, that I have thus ventured to

give my opinion more in detail. Efficient gallery lessons--efficient

teachers must be made. They do not at present exist in large numbers,

and can only be made by a suitable reward being held out to them, and

by their being placed under the superintendence of experienced persons

acquainted with the art. The art of teaching is no mean art, and must,

sooner or later, take its proper rank amongst the other sciences.

It is a science which requires deep study and knowledge of human

character, and is only to be learned like all other sciences, by much

perseverance and practice. In another work, on the education of older

children, I have given some specimens of gallery lessons; in this I

shall endeavour to give a few specimens of what I think useful lessons

for infants, and shall also try to clothe them in language suited to

the infant apprehensions; and I sincerely hope they may shew in a

plain manner the method of giving this species of instruction to the

children, and that teachers who were before ignorant of it, may be

benefitted thereby. I shall not pretend to give my opinion as to

whether I have succeeded, but will leave this point entirely to the

judgment and candour of my readers; for I know by experience that it

is a very difficult thing to put practice into theory; and although

this may seem paradoxical, yet I have no doubt that many have

experienced the very same results when trying to explain theoretically

on paper what they have with ease practised a thousand times.

These oral lessons on real objects ought to be given in pure, simple,

and plain language, level to the understanding and capacity of

children. It may be well at times to use words of a more difficult

or scientific character; but these should always have the proper

explanation given; the words used most frequently in common life, in

ordinary and proper conversation, ought to be most strongly impressed

on their memories. It may, perhaps, be retorted on me--why then teach

the difficult and scientific names of geometrical figures. The answer

is very simple. Most of them have no other, and where they have I

always give them also, as sloping, slanting, inclined, for oblique.

The geometrical figures are the elements of all forms, and the

simplest objects which can be presented to the young. I have found

them always learned with the greatest ease and pleasure. Pestalozzi, I

have understood, was led to the use of them by observing the wants

of the young mind, in a similar manner that I was myself. This is,

therefore, one of the many coincidences in thought and discovery by

minds wholly independent of each other, which have been directed to

the same subjects. This is an evitable result. If two men look at the

moon, both must see that it is round, bright, and mottled; and if

two minds far apart, turn their attention to similar subjects, the

probability is that their views will coincide. The most powerful mind

will of course make the deepest and simplest discovery.

Object lessons should be given chiefly on such things as fall under

more constant observation and are daily coming before the sight, and

then useful knowledge will be accumulated, and frequently reimpressed

upon the memory by the seeing of the objects.

GALLERY LESSONS ON A FEATHER.

We will suppose the children all properly seated, the little girls

on one side of the gallery and the little boys on the other, as

represented on the plan-plate. If the morning is fine and clear, a

lesson may be given on an object that the children are not frequently

in the habit of seeing; but should the weather be hazy, and the

atmosphere heavy, then a lesson must be given on some object which

they all frequently see, say, for example, a feather. The feather must

be held up in the hand, or placed in a small niche on the top of a

pointer, so that every child will see it, and it must be moved about

in various directions to arrest their attention. The first lesson

should be pure development, which is to get every idea from the

children relative to the object before you. Explain to them yours; as

for example,

"What is this?" The universal shout will be, "A feather." You may then

ask them, What are its uses? Some little creatures will say, to blow

about; others will say, to cover birds; others will say, to stuff

pillows and beds to sleep upon. Having got all the information out of

them you can in their own simple language, you have acted according to

nature's law, and it is now your turn to infuse additional information

into their minds, and, give them the benefit of your superior

knowledge; which may be done as follows:--You have told me that

feathers are useful to cover birds, it was for this that they were

made by God; they keep the birds warm just in the same way as your

clothes keep you from being cold; and as the poor birds cannot make

themselves clothes as men can, God has given them feathers that they

may not be cold when the bad weather comes. The feathers are useful to

the birds also in flying; the long feathers in a bird's wing keep him

in the air, which he could not fly through if he was covered with

any thing else, because feathers are very light. Seven of the large

feathers out of the great eagle's wing would not weigh more than two

halfpennies. The wings of a bird make him able to fly, and the tail

guides him through the air, just as you may see the men steer boats

with the rudder; and if you pulled the feathers off his tail, he would

not be able to fly near so straight or fast as when they are on. When

the rain falls on the feathers, they are never soaked through with it

as a piece of rag would be if you threw water on it, because they are

covered with a sort of oil which does not let in the water. If you

ever look at a duck dive into the water, you can see it when it comes

up quite dry; but if you dipped you head into the water it would wet

it all over. When little birds, such as the sparrow and canary, come

out of the egg, they have no feathers on, but the old ones cover them

with their wings to keep the cold away, and the feathers soon

grow, and then they can fly away and find food and make nests for

themselves; but large birds, such as the goose, turkey, hen, and duck,

have a sort of soft down on them when they come out of the shell,

and little ducks will go and swim as soon as they are hatched, as I

suppose some of you have seen.

Some birds' feathers are much prettier than others: the goose has not

such pretty feathers as the swan, nor the swan as the peacock; but we

must not think ill of the goose for this, for its flesh is better to

eat than either the peacock or swan. I am sure many of you little

children like roast goose. The peacock has very pretty feathers

indeed, and so has the pheasant, and the drake, and the cock; but some

birds that live in countries many hundred miles away from this, have

much prettier than any bird that lives in this country. This feather

that we have for our lesson is the feather of a goose; it is not very

pretty, but if we examine it well we shall find it is very curious,

and all the men in the world could not make one like it. Goose

feathers are the most useful; the small ones make stuffing for pillows

and beds, and the large ones make pens to write with. Birds change

their feathers often; they drop off and they get new ones; this is

called moulting.

Having thus given the children as much information on the subject as

they will be likely to be able to digest properly, you may then get it

back from them by question and answer; as for instance

Q. What have we been talking about? A. Birds' feathers. Q. Do they do

the birds any good? A. Yes, keep them warm. Q. What more good? A. Make

them able to fly. Q. Who gives the birds feathers to make them warm?

A. God. Q. Are feathers very heavy? A. No, very light. Q. What is the

reason that they are very light? A. That they may fly easily. Q. What

part of the body does a bird fly with? A. Its wings. Q. Is no other

part useful in flying? A. Yes. Q. Do you remember what part? A. Its

tail. Q. Of what use is its tail? A. To guide it. Q. What do you mean

by guiding it? A. Turning it any way it wants to go. Q. What is the

reason that birds' feathers do not get all full of wet when the rain

falls on them? A. Because there is an oily juice that makes the rain

fall off. Q. When little birds, such as sparrows and robins, come out

of the eggs, have they got feathers? A. No, they are naked. Q. Are

they very long naked? A. No, in a few days the feathers grow. Q. Is it

not curious that the cold does not kill the little birds while they

are naked? A. So it would, only the old ones sit over them and keep

them warm. Q. Are ducks and turkeys and hens naked when the come out

of the shell? A. No. Q. What are they covered with? A. A sort of down.

Q. Do you know of any bird that has very pretty feathers? A. Yes, the

peacock. Q. Is it prettier than the goose? A. Yes. Q. Is it so useful?

A. No. Q. What do the goose feathers make? A. The feathers in the

quill make pelts? Q. What do the small ones make? A. They make

stuffing for pillows and beds. Q. Where do the prettiest birds live?

A. In very warm places, far away from this. Q. Do the same feathers

always remain on a bird? A. No, they drop off, and new ones come. Q.

What is this called? A. Moulting.

Such lessons as this will never be forgotten by the little ones. They

will learn to adore the great God at the sight of any thing he has

made. It is hoped they learn to love to read Nature's book when they

grow older, as every correct notion obtained by a child, through a

natural object, which it is frequently accustomed to meet with, can

never be entirely effaced; and what is more, it prepares the way,

at some future time, for a larger amount of knowledge as to God's

revealed will.

A spider, a living specimen of which may be easily procured, may be

made a very instructive gallery lesson; it may prevent the fears and

foolish prejudices against ugly yet harmless insects, which often

remain through life. Part of a bush may be procured with a real web

and spider upon it, so that its beautiful and highly curious web may

be also exhibited to the children, its uses may be also pointed out,

and a short history of the little animal's habits may be given, but

not before their opinions have been taken on the object, which may be

done in a similar manner as that which we pointed out in the former

lesson, and then the teacher may proceed thus:

You have told me that this little creature is called a spider, and

some of you think it very ugly, and say you are afraid of it, but

sensible children will not be frightened at a spider, because they

will remember that they are very harmless little things, and have not

got a sting as the wasp and bee have. They are very ugly, to be sure,

but every ugly insect is not to be called a nasty creature, for some

are very useful, notwithstanding their not being as handsome as

others; and spiders are very useful too, although very few people know

how to make use of them; but they little think that the poor little

insect which they brush off the wall, and trample under their feet,

can tell them what weather they are going to have, as sure, and surer

than a weather-glass. When the weather is going to be fine it peeps

its head out of its hole, and stretches out its legs; and the farther

its legs and head are out, the longer will the fine weather stay. When

the weather is going to be very bad it goes farther back; and when

very dreadful and stormy weather is going to come, it turns its back

to the door of its hole and its head inside. In winter, when frost and

snow is going to commence, they make their webs very fast, and by this

you may know the frosty weather is coming; so you see, children, that

spiders may be useful to know what kind of weather we shall have.

Spiders are very cunning; they live on flies; but they could never

catch them, only they are able to weave a strong web, which they do in

a place where the flies often come; and when a poor fly gets into the

web, the spider runs out and soon kills it, and then drags it up to

his den, where he eats it at his ease, and hides the wings and skin,

that the other flies may not see them; but if an enemy stronger than

itself comes to his web, the spider remains in his hole till the

danger is all over. Some spiders that live in countries far away are a

great deal larger and uglier than our spiders; but we need not be ever

afraid of a spider, because they can neither bite nor sting us, and

are very curious insects. Q. What have I been telling you about? A.

The spider. Q. Are you afraid of it? A. No, you told us it would do

us no harm. Q. Are spiders very ugly? A. They are. Q. Should we think

badly of them for this? A. No. Q. Who made the spider? A. God. Q. Does

he not make every animal, whether handsome or ugly? A. Yes. Q. Can

spiders be of use? A. They will tell us what weather we are going to

have. Q. When it is going to be fine what do they do? A. They put

their legs and head out of their hole. Q. When it is going to be bad

weather what do they do? A. They turn their heads round and go into

their holes. Q. When the weather is going to be very cold and frosty

what do they do? A. They build their webs very fast. Q. What do they

live upon? A. Flies. Q. How do they catch them? A. By making webs. Q.

When a fly gets into their web what do they do? A. They kill it and

eat it. Q. Are the spiders in other countries larger than ours? A.

Yes, in some places they are much larger and uglier. Q. Who teaches

the spider to make its web? A. God. Q. Could any man in the world make

a spider's web? A. No, no one could do it.

The teacher may then add thus:--Thus you see, little children, that

every living thing has some merit of its own, and can do many things

which we cannot do, although God has given us the means to become so

much wiser than they; and be sure you are not frightened at them, nor

put them to unnecessary pain. Some other day I will tell you what is

the shape of the spider's web, and shew you what a number of regular

figures the spider's web is composed of.

Almost every object, however simple it may be, will form an

instructive gallery lesson; thus for example, you may take a piece of

bog-turf, and after submitting it to the inspection of the infants,

you may inquire, What is this? If it be in a country where turf is

used, a general exclamation will inform you of its name; if not, you

may find a better and more familiar object for your lesson. When you

have got the name, you may then ask its uses, and will soon find that

the children are well acquainted with them. You may then proceed

to give your own information on the subject in something like the

following words, taking care that you use no word that the children do

not themselves understand, or that you have not explained to them.

Little children, look at what I hold. You have told me it is a piece

of bog-turf, and it is used to make fires. In Ireland turf is more

used to make fires than coal, because it is very plentiful there, and

many of the poor people in Ireland build their houses of it, and

when they keep them well mended and covered, they are very warm and

comfortable, and they burn good turf fires in their turf houses; but

some of them are lazy, and do not keep their turf houses mended, so

the rain comes in, and they are very miserable, and so will all idle

lazy people be. I hope no little child here will be lazy, Now I will

tell you where they get all this turf, they dig it out of the bogs.

There are bogs in England; they call them mosses or fens, and in

Scotland there are bogs, but the bogs in Ireland are much more

plentiful. Some of them are so very large that you cannot see across

them, and a great many birds live amongst them, such as wild ducks,

and geese, and cranes, and herons, and snipe, all of which I will tell

you about some other time. Those great bogs are very wild, lonesome,

dreary places; no person can live on them, because they are so wet and

soft, and they are full of great deep holes with water in them, which

are called bog holes, and if any person fell in they would be drowned.

Sometimes in the middle of this great bog you will see a pretty green

island, where the land is firm and strong, and the grass is nice and

sweet, so that the poor people make a dry path across the wet bog to

these islands, that they may drive their cows, and goats, and horses

to feed there; and some of these islands are very pretty places, and

look so green in the centre of the black bog. Those bogs which are now

such wet, black, nasty places, were once forests of great trees, as

large as any you children ever saw, and pretty bright rivers ran

through those forests, and nice birds sang in the branches, and great

stags eat the grass underneath; we will read about the stag at some

other time. This was many hundred years ago, and there were very few

people living then in Ireland, and by degrees, when the trees got very

old, they began to fall down into the rivers and stopped them up, so

that the water could not flow on, and the rivers overflowed all the

nice forests, and the trees all fell, so that when some hundred years

passed they were all down, and the branches rotted, and the grass and

clay became wet, like sponge, and the whole of the nice shady forests

of great trees became what we call bogs, and the remains of those

pretty branches and leaves, where the birds used to sing so sweetly,

has become turf, like this piece which we have for a lesson; and when

men are cutting this turf out, they often find the great trunks of

those trees, that many hundred years ago were so green and beautiful,

quite black and ugly, but still so hard that they can scarcely be cut,

and these old trees are called bog-oak, and the cabinet-maker buys

them and makes them into beautiful chairs, and tables, and presses,

and many other things, and they are quite black, and when polished you

little children might see your faces in them. Thus you see, my little

children, that there is nothing which God has made which is not very

wonderful and curious, even this piece of bog-turf, which you would

not have heard about if you did not come to the infant school to learn

about so many useful and curious things.

This will perhaps be enough of information for one lesson; and having

thus infused it in an agreeable form into their minds, you may proceed

in the manner before mentioned to get it back from them, in order to

impress it more firmly on their understandings; and if this be always

done in the proper manner, they will become as familiar with the

subject, and learn it as quickly as they would the tissue of nonsense

contained in the common nursery tales of "Jack and Jill," or, "the old

woman and her silver penny," whose only usefulness consists in their

ability to amuse, but from which no instruction can be possibly drawn;

beside which, they form in the child's mind the germ of that passion

for light reading which afterwards, in many instances, prevents an

application to any thing solid or instructive. Being in themselves the

foundation stone on which a huge and useless mass of fiction is piled

in after years, the philosophical mind will at once perceive the

advantage of our system of amusement mingled with instruction,

and perceive that upon its simple basis a noble structure may be

afterwards raised; and minds well stored with useful lore, and

capable of discerning evil in whatever shape it presents itself, and

extracting honey from every object, will be farmed, which, when they

become numerous, will cause a glorious change in the moral world, the

first germ of which will be traced to the properly managed gallery

lessons of an infant school. Having asked the children if they are

tired, the teacher, if he receives an answer in the negative, may thus

proceed:--

Q. What have we been hearing about? A. Turf. Q. What is the use of

turf? A. To make fires. Q. What other use is sometimes made of it? A.

To build houses. Q. Where do they build turf houses? A. In Ireland. Q.

Are they not very cold? Q. No; if they are kept mended, they are not.

Q. What do you call people, when they like to sleep in the cold rather

than mend their houses? A. Lazy. Q. Is it bad to be lazy? A. Yes; very

bad. Q. What do we call it besides being lazy? Q. Being idle. Q. Are

idle people very happy? A. No; they are always miserable. Q. Right;

and I hope no little children will be ever idle; they should always

try to be useful, and do all they can to help their friends. Now tell

me, where is the turf got From? A. From bogs. Q. What are they called

in England? A. Mosses and fens. Q. Are the bogs in England larger than

in Ireland? A. No; the Irish bogs are the largest. Q. What animals

live in the bogs? A. Some sorts of birds. Q. Do men and women live in

them? A. No. Q. Why not? A. They are too wet and soft. Q. What very

dangerous places are in some parts of them? A. Bog-holes. Q. What are

they? A. Deep holes full of water. Q. What did I tell you were in some

parts of these bogs? A. Nice green islands. Q. Are they of any use? A.

Yes; the people put cows and horses to feed on them. Q. How do they

get across the bog? A. They make a kind of rough road over to them. Q.

What do they cut the turf with? A. A sort of spade with two sides. Q.

What is this called? A. A Slane. Q. When the turf is cut, what do they

do next? A. Put it in heaps to dry. Q. What were those great bogs many

hundred years ago? A. Beautiful forests of fine large trees. Q. What

flowed through those forests? A. Nice bright rivers. Q. What sang in

the trees? A. Pretty birds. Q. What eat the grass? A. Fine large stags

and deer. Q. How did those beautiful places become ugly black wet

bogs? A. The trees, when they got old, fell into the rivers and

stopped them up. Q. What did this cause? A. The water flowed over the

banks. Q. What harm did this do? A. It made all the nice grass wet and

marshy. Q. What more? A. It rotted the roots of the trees. Q. What

happened then? A. They all fell down. Q. In some hundred years, what

did all those forests become? A. Great bogs. Q. Are any of the trunks

or bodies of those old trees ever found? A. Yes; many hundreds are yet

far under the bogs. Q. Are they of any use? A. Yes; they are useful to

make chairs, tables, and presses. Q. What colour are they? A. As black

as a piece of coal. Q. When they are polished, do they look nice? A.

Yes; so bright you can see your face in them. Q. What is this wood

called? A. Bog-oak. Q. Will you all try to remember this lesson? A.

We will. Teacher. That is right; for little children should always

remember the pretty things that their teacher takes such trouble to

tell them.

In places where coal is most burned, a piece of it may be made the

medium of a very useful and instructive lesson, being so familiar an

object, their attention will be arrested by its being made the subject

of a lesson; and their curiosity aroused to know every thing about

it. When the teacher asks what is this, the simultaneous shout, of

"a piece of coal," will convince him that he has arrested their

attention; and a few questions will exhaust their stock of information

on the subject--they will tell him its uses are to make fires to boil

up their dinners, &c. &c. He may then proceed as follows:--You see,

little children, this piece of coal; look at it attentively; it is

black and shining; and you all know will burn very quickly. The places

from whence all coal is brought are called \_coal mines\_; the men who

dig it out of the ground, and the ships that carry it over the sea,

are called colliers, and the place where the coals are got is called

a colliery. The coal mines are deep holes made very far under the

ground, in order to get at the coal; some of them go under the sea.

The colliers live a great part of their life, in those dark holes,

in order to get us coal to make us fires to dress our food, and very

often are killed, either by the falling in of the roof from above, or

from a sort of air called fire-damp, which, if touched with any fire,

will blow up like gunpowder, and will kill any person that is near it;

the poor colliers are also often smothered by the bad air that is in

those damp, dark holes; so you see, little children, what dangers they

go through, in order to get us coal, which we could very badly do

without.

How very good God is to us; he made this coal under the earth that we

might have nice fires to dress our food, and warm ourselves by in

cold weather; we should be very thankful to him for all his great

blessings, and should never do anything to make him angry with us; he

is very sorry when he sees a little child naughty, because he has done

every thing to make us happy, and we never can be so if we are naughty

and bad. Bad boys and girls are never happy, and God does not love

them when they are so, and it is very sad to make God angry with us.

Coal is very useful for other things besides making fires to dress our

food, and to warm us. Many things that are very useful could not be

made without it. The gas that lights the streets is made from coal,

and when the gas is taken from it what is left is called coke, which

makes a very bright warm fire.

The teacher that properly enters into the spirit of these lessons, may

find in the simplest objects, a never-ending source of pleasure and

instruction for his infant pupils. No person who is not qualified to

give proper and really useful gallery lessons is by any means fit for

a teacher of infants; to learn the mere routine of an infant school is

not very difficult, but this will be of no avail if the teacher have

not qualifications of a much higher order, which will enable him

continually to pour instruction clothed in simple language, into

the minds of his pupils; simplicity is the life and soul of gallery

teaching; without this, the breath is wasted, and time is spent in

vain. To teach infants we must reduce our language to their tender

capacities, and become, in idea and words, one of themselves. Having

given the children your information on a piece of coal, you now

proceed to get it back, as follows

Q. Little children, what have we been speaking about? A. About coal.

Q. What colour is it? A. Black. Q. Is it anything besides? A. Yes;

shining. Q. What are the places called from whence coal is got? A.

Coal-mines. Q. What are the men that dig it out of the ground and the

ships that carry it over the sea called? A. Colliers. Q. What is the

place called where the coal pits are made? A. A colliery. Q. What are

coal pits? A. Deep holes dug to get at the coal. Q. Are the colliers

in danger down in these deep pits? A. They are. Q. From what? A.

From fire-damp? Q. What is it? A. A sort of air that blows up like

gun-powder. Q. From what more are they in danger? A. The roofs falling

in. Q. From what more? A. From bad air which often smothers them. Q.

What is made from coal to light the streets? A. Gas. Q. What is coal

called after the gas has been taken from it? A. Coke. Q. Does coke

make a good fire? A. Yes; very bright and strong. Q. Who made the

coal? A. God. Q. What should we be to him for it? A. Very thankful. Q.

How can we shew we are thankful? A. By being very good. Q. Is God

glad to see a child naughty? A. No; he is very sorry. Q. Does he love

naughty children? A. No; he does not. Q. Are naughty children happy?

A. No; very unhappy. Thus every lesson may be made not only a vehicle

for conveying instruction, but also of instilling into the infant mind

a reverence, a sense of gratitude and love towards that great Being

who called us all into existence; this should be never lost sight of,

in giving the child those primary sentiments, reverence and gratitude

towards its God, you lay a basis on which doctrinal religion may be

afterwards built with more advantage. The child thus early trained in

such feelings, conveyed in a manner so admirably adapted to its tender

mind, can scarcely fail, unless it possesses a heart of great natural

depravity, of becoming a good man, and it is thus that infant schools

may become a great and lasting blessing to the country. But where

this is overlooked--where the vital principle of the infant system

is rejected, and the mere mechanical parts alone retained, as to any

great and lasting benefit, it will be a complete and unhappy failure.

That the grand object of the infant system may be accomplished,

namely, of raising up a generation superior to the last, both in

religious, moral, and intellectual acquirements, an immense caution

and great experience in the selection of teachers is required; till

proper teachers are universally provided the infant system will never

be really successful: success does not merely consist in universal

adoption and extension, if it did it would be now really so. But

another thing is wanting before it can be called successful, that is,

it must be understood.

None can understand it but thinkers, and deep thinkers, and thinkers

in the right direction. Merely to glance around and gather scraps of

knowledge from the various, "ologies" in existence, which the "march

of intellect" has brought into being, and which were unknown to our

forefathers; and then to force them on the young memory at random, may

be to teach what was not before taught, but it is not to display any

\_new method of teaching; any more efficient way of communicating

knowledge\_. Those who would truly understand the infant system, must

think for themselves, and observe the workings of the young mind, mark

the intellectual principles which first develope themselves, strive to

understand the simple laws of mental action; and all this that they

may know how to teach in accordance with them. When this is fairly

done, perhaps the whole that is recorded in this book, may be thought

more valuable than it is at present, and be found a not unworthy

subject to devote a whole life to become acquainted with and elucidate

both practically and theoretically. Others then will, perhaps, not be

quite so audacious in unjust plagiarisms. When Columbus had made

the egg stand on an end all others could then do it. When he had

discovered America, every one said they might have done it also. All

great and important truths are simple, and when presented to the mind,

although unknown before, seem as if they had been well known, there is

such an accurate consistency between the mind and them. This leads me

to suppose that there is simple and useful truths in my volumes, as

every one seems to take them for their own. I can only say that they

have cost \_me\_ many and many an hour of close observation, and deep

and independent thinking. I have devoted my whole life for the good

of others, and have injured myself and family, that I might do so. To

rescue little children from vice and misery, and to have them placed

under physical, intellectual, moral, and religious discipline, has

been the delight of my heart, and the object of my life. After this

labour, to have my inventions pirated, my plans made use of in part,

and in the rest spoken against; to have others to reap the fields that

I have sown, and at the same time traduce and injure me; to be thus

thrust out as it were from my rightful employment, and left in

comparative obscurity as old age begins to draw on; requires a spirit

stronger than that of man, and a heart more than human, not to feel

it, and feel it deeply. I care little for myself, but regret most to

see spurious systems of infant education palmed upon the public by

ignorant persons, and thus deprive them of a great benefit which they

might possess.

Facts recorded in Scripture may be given orally as gallery lessons,

taking care to exhibit some picture representing the subject proposed

for the lesson--take, for example, the finding of Moses--which

represents the daughter of Pharaoh coming down to bathe with her

maidens, and also the infant Moses in the ark, cradle, or boat, which

was made for the purpose. The subject is then to be propounded to the

children as follows, and the teacher is to take care to repeat it

clearly and distinctly in short sentences, and to be careful that

all the pupils repeat it as distinctly after him; by thus means the

essence of the story is infused into the minds of the children, with

the addition of their being taught to repeat all the words distinctly

and properly, which will assist their pronunciation very much when

they begin to read the lesson described in another part of this work.

"And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river,

and her maidens walked along by the river's side, and when she saw the

ark among the flags she sent her maid to fetch it, and when she had

opened it she saw the child, and behold the babe wept. And she had

compassion on him; and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children.

Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to

thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for

thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go; and the maid went and

called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take

this child away and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages;

and the woman took the child and nursed it, and the child grew, and

she brought hum unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son, and

she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the

water."--\_Exodus\_ ii.

Q. What does this picture represent? A. The finding of Moses. Q. Who

came down to wash herself at the river? A. Pharaoh's daughter. Q. Who

was Pharaoh? A. The king of Egypt. Q. What is Egypt? A. A country in

Africa. Q. What is Africa? A. A part of the earth on which we live. Q.

Where did her maidens walk? A. They walked along by the river's side.

Q. When Pharaoh's daughter saw the ark amongst the flags, what did she

do? A. She sent her maid to fetch it. Q. And when she opened it, what

did she see. A. She saw the child. Q. What was the ark? A. A sort of

boat made of rushes, such as grow in the river. Q. Would not the water

get into this? A. No; it was kept dry inside by pitch and slime. Q.

What were the flags that the ark was among? A. A sort of plant that

grows in rivers. Q. Did the child laugh? A. No; it wept, and she had

compassion on him. Q. And what did she say? A. This is one of the

Hebrews' children. Q. What did his sister say to Pharaoh's daughter?

A. Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women? Q. What is

meant by his sister? A. The sister of Moses who stood to watch what

would become of him. Q. What did she ask to call a nurse for? A. To

nurse the child. Q. What did Pharaoh's daughter say? A. Go. Q. Who

did the maid fetch? A. The child's mother. Q. When she came what did

Pharaoh's daughter say to her? A. Take this child away and nurse it

for me. Q. And what did she say she would give her? A. Her wages. Q.

Did the woman take the child? A. Yes; and nursed it. Q. What became of

the child? A. It grew, and she brought it unto Pharaoh's daughter, and

it became her son. Q. What name did she give him? A. She called his

name Moses. Q. What for? A. Because she drew hum out of the water.

Q. Look at this picture, what is the girl holding over Pharaoh's

daughter's head? A. A sort of umbrella. Q. What is she holding it up

for? A. To keep away the heat of the sun. Q. Were there slaves in

those days? A. Yes. Q. Is the little girl holding the umbrella meant

to represent a slave? A. Yes. Q. Do you know what a slave is? A. A

person who is taken from his home and made to work for nothing and

against his wills.

Christ with the doctors in the temple, forms, when given as explained,

a good gallery lesson--thus:

"And it came to pass that after those days she found him in the temple

sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them

questions; and all that heard him were astonished at his understanding

and answers. And when they saw him they were amazed, and his mother

said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy

father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How

is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's

business. And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto

them; but his mother kept all these sayings in \_her heart\_: and

Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and

man."--\_Luke\_ ii. 46-52.

Q. Where did they find him? A. In the temple. Q. Sitting in the midst

of whom? A. Of the doctors. Q. What was he doing there? A. Hearing and

asking them questions. Q. And they were astonished at his, what? A.

Understanding and answers. Q. What did Jesus' mother say unto him? A.

Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Q. What more did she say? A.

Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. Q. What did Jesus say

unto her? A. He said, how is it that ye sought me? Q. Did he say

anything more? A. Yes; wist ye not that I must be about my father's

business. Q. What is the meaning of wist ye not? A. Know ye not. Q.

When Jesus went with them, where did they come to? A. To Nazareth? Q.

What is Nazareth? A. A town in Asia. Q. His mother kept those sayings,

where? A. In her heart. Q. In what did Jesus increase? A. In wisdom

and stature. Q. What do you mean by increasing in stature? A. Growing

larger.

Many books of scripture stories have been written for children, but

it is far best to select simple and suitable passages from the sacred

volume, and have them properly illustrated by coloured plates. By

this method the children become acquainted with the very letter of

scripture. Written stories often leave very wrong impressions; and the

history of David and Goliah has been given in an infant school, so

that it would make an excellent counterpart to Jack, the giant

killer. Surely such things ought never to be! Abundance of historical

portions, full of moral and religious instruction, and such as are

calculated from their simplicity and beauty, to deeply impress the

minds of children, can be selected from both Testaments; but the

miracles and parables of our Saviour constitute the richest store.

MORAL TRAINING.

One of the grand aims of the infant system was intended to improve

the system of moral training. The great deficiency in our systems of

education, with respect to moral training, is truly lamentable, from

the highest down to the lowest schools in the land. There is room for

immense improvement in this matter, it is hardly possible to visit a

school and witness proper efforts made on this important subject; and

never will education produce the glorious effects anticipated from

it, until this subject is legislated for and well understood by the

public; and I pray to God that he will enable me to use arguments in

this chapter to prove effective in the minds of my readers, so as to

induce them to co-operate with me to produce another state of things.

In these days there is much said about education; it has at last

arrested the attention of parliament; and through them, the

government, and, as it should be, through the government, the

sovereign. Thus is truly encouraging and will act as a stimulus to

practical men to develop a system workable in all its parts, and thus

carry out the views and benevolent intentions of the legislature.

Infant education, however, must be the basis, this is beginning at

the right end; if errors are committed here the superstructure is

of little avail. The foundation of moral training must be laid in

infancy, it cannot be begun too soon, and is almost always commenced

too late. Mere infants can understand the doing as they would be done

by; no child likes to be deprived of its play-things, his little toys,

or any thing which he considers his property; he will always punish

the aggressor if he can, and if he cannot he will cry, or put himself

in a passion, or seek aid from his parents, or any other source

where he thinks he may get justice done to him. Little children have

beautiful ideas on this subject, and would have, if properly trained,

correct notions as to the rights of property; to teach them to respect

the property of others, and even to respect themselves, is far

preferable to cramming their memories with good rules in theory; this

was the old plan; we have proof that it has not worked well. The new

plan must operate upon the will, it must influence the heart of the

child; this is the Scripture plan, which continually refers to the

heart, and not so much to the head. Every opportunity must be allowed

the child to develop its character; to do this it must be associated

with its fellows; if the child is a solitary being, his faculties

cannot be drawn out, it is in society only they can be beneficially

acted upon, and it is in the company of its fellows, that it will

shew its true character and disposition; hence the necessity of moral

training. There should be temptations placed within reach of the

children, such as fruits, flowers, and shrubs. The child taught to

respect these will set due bounds to his desire, gardens will cease to

be robbed, hedges will not be broken down, turnips and potatoes will

not be stolen to the extent which is but too prevalent in the present

day. And I am perfectly convinced that every pound the country spends

in promoting a rightly directed education, will be saved in the

punishment of crime, which in a political point of view, is quite

sufficient to induce the country to call for a properly directed

system of national education, which must ultimately be based on the

oracles of eternal truth. If these ends could be obtained by theory,

we have plenty of that in these days. All the writers on education

tell us that such and such things should be done, but most of them

that I have read, forget to tell us how to do it. They complain of

the schools already in existence, they complain of the teachers, they

complain of the apathy upon the subject; all of which is very easy.

And I regret to say there is but too much cause for all these

complaints; but this will not remedy the evil, we must have new plans

for moral training; teachers must have greater encouragements held out

to them; they must take their proper rank in society, which I contend

is next to the clergy; and, until these things take place, we may go

on complaining, as talented men will sooner devote themselves to any

profession rather than to the art of teaching.

We will now endeavour to show how these things are to be remedied, so

far as moral training is applicable to infants from twelve months old

to six or seven years. In another part of this work, we have shewn

what may and ought to be done in the play-ground; in this chapter

we will endeavour to shew what may be done to this end in the

school-room. In the pages on gallery teaching we have given specimens

of lessons on natural objects and scriptural subjects. Moral training

may receive considerable aid from gallery teaching also; the children

must not only be continually told what they ought to do, but as often

what they ought not to do; they must be told that they are not to

fight, and the reasons must be given; they must be told that they are

not to throw stones, and also told the consequences; they must be told

not to strike each other with sticks; they must be told not to play in

the dirt; they must be trained in cleanly and delicate habits; they

must not only be told all these things; but they must be watched in

their private hours, they must be encouraged to assist and love each

other, and it must \_be proved\_ to them that this is the way to advance

their own individual happiness. It is self-love that is the cause of

half our miseries. Children cannot be told this too soon; it must be

explained \_and proved\_ to them that evil, sooner or latter, brings its

own punishment, and that goodness as assuredly brings its own reward.

Opportunities will be continually developing themselves for giving

moral training to the children, the judicious teacher will seize these

as they occur, and always make the best of them for the good of

the children. A school is a family upon a large scale; nay, 'tis a

commonwealth, and no day will pass without facts shewing themselves,

to enable the teacher to give sound moral instruction. It is true we

want a better race of teachers, but we must have a better sort of

schools first; for it is only from these that a better race of

teachers can be supplied. The well trained infants of this generation,

will make the efficient teachers of the next.

We will suppose the children to be seated in the gallery, the doors of

the school closed, and every thing snug and quiet; \_the teacher must

be alone\_, and there must be nothing to distract the children's

attention. He must then bring out his store of facts which he has

noted down as they occurred; he makes his selection according to

circumstances, according to the state of his own mind; not forgetting

the state of mind that the children may be in, and especially the

state of the weather. The following little ditty may then be repeated,

the subject being On Cruelty to Animals.

I'll never hurt my little dog,

But stroke and pat his head;

I love to see him wag his tail,

I like to see him fed.

Poor little thing, how very good

And very useful too;

And do you know? that he will mind

What he is bid to do.

Then I will never hurt my dog,

Nor ever give him pain,

But I will always treat him kind,

And he will love again.

If the children do not appear so bright as the teacher should desire,

the before-mentioned ditty, after it has been repeated, may be sung.

But the tune must be such as would be likely to operate upon the moral

feelings; great caution and circumspection is necessary in selecting

proper times for children, and this must be guided by the subject

treated of. If the subject is exhilarating, a lively tune must be

selected; if the subject is serious, a corresponding tune must also be

chosen; but if the subject is intended to operate upon the feelings,

what is usually called "\_a love tune\_" will be the most desirable. The

tune having been sung, and the feelings operated upon as desired, the

teacher may entertain the little pupils with some one of the numerous

stories written about the dog. But before he does this, he must

exhaust so much of the subject as appears in the before-mentioned

ditty, by question and answer, similar to the other lessons mentioned

before, something like the following:--

Little children; you have just sung that you would never hurt a little

dog, can you tell me why not? Some of the children will be sure to

say, Please, sir, because he has got the sense of feeling. Teacher.

Right, a little dog has got the same sense of feeling as you little

children have, and when it is hurt, how does it shew that it has got

the sense of feeling? Children. Please, sir, it will cry out. Teacher.

Yes, it can only tell us it is hurt by doing so. A poor dog cannot

speak, and so we should never hurt it. Has a little fly the sense of

feeling? Children. Yes, sir. Teacher. Right again, and so has every

creature that God gave life to, and we should never give any of them

unnecessary pain. In the song that we have just sung, you said you

would stroke and pat the little dog's head. What would you do this

for? Children. Please, sir, the little dog likes it, and he is not

afraid of us when we do it, but loves us. Teacher. So he does, and

will always love those that are kind to him; no one but a very bad boy

would be unkind to a dog. You told me, little children, that a poor

little dog cries out when it is hurt. Now when he is pleased, what

does he do? Please, sir, he wags his tail, and his eyes look very

bright. Teacher. So he does, which is the same as if he said, How

happy I am to be with such good children who do not beat me as some

wicked boys and girls would, but love me and pat my head, and feed me;

for you, little children, you have said you liked to see your little

dog fed, and remember, any of you that have a little dog, or who may

have one when you get older and larger, that it is very cruel not to

see it fed every day; the poor dog cannot ask for its dinner as a

little child can, and that is the, very reason why we should always

remember to give it to him. Will you all remember this? Children. Yes,

sir, we will. Teacher. You sung in your song that the dog was very

useful, tell me how? Children, Please, sir, he will mind the house,

and bark when any one comes to steal anything. Teacher. Yes, you see

how sensible the little dog is, he knows what a wicked thing it is to

be a thief, and so he barks when he sees one. How else is a little

dog useful? Children. Please, sir, they often lead poor blind people

about. Teacher. So they do, and good faithful guides they are. When

they see any danger they will lead their master out of it, and they

will bring him safely through the crowded streets; and when they go

home the poor blind man divides his bit of bread with his good dog;

and dogs are useful in other ways, they catch hares and rabbits for

their masters, and do many other things. You said also that the dog

minded what he was bid to do, did you not? Children. Yes, sir, and

they will often go back a long way for any thing they are bid, or stay

all day minding their master's coat while he is at work. Teacher.

Right, and little children when they will not do as they are desired

are not so good as a little dog, and should take example by one. Do

you remember what you said the dog would do if you treated him kindly?

Children. Please, sir, that he would love us again. Teacher. Right.

When we love any thing, a dog, or a horse, or a little lamb, it will

love us again; for you know, little children, that love makes love,

and if you all love one another, and are kind to one another, and

never beat or strike each other with any thing, then you will all be

very happy, no little children in the world will be more happy, or

have prettier smiling faces than you will have; for when we look kind

and pleasant we always look pretty, but when we look cross and angry,

then we look ugly and frightful. Remember then, never be cruel to a

dog, or any thing else, but think of this lesson, and the pretty song

we sung. Now, little children, shall I tell you a story, a real true

story about a very cruel boy? If the children say, Yes, the following

may be related.

A poor little dog was once going along the streets of a town, and a

carriage which was coming up the street very fast, ran over it, and

the poor thing was very nearly killed, but it had still strength to

crawl over to a house where a boy was standing at the door, and it

began to whine and looked up in the boy's face, as if to say, you see

how much I am hurt, so please take me in and try and cure me; but the

boy was a very cruel boy, and had no pity on the poor dog, but took a

large pot of boiling water and threw it over the poor wounded little

dog, so that it died soon after in very dreadful pain. But the chief

governor of the place, that is, the person whom the king had put there

to punish wicked people, heard of what a cruel thing this bad boy had

done. So he brought him up to the market place, and he made a man take

off this cruel boy's clothes, and lash him on the bare back before all

the people of the town, in order that he might know a little of the

pain that the poor dog had felt. From this story, little children, you

may learn, that you must not begin to be cruel, if you do, the habit

will grow up with you as it did with this bigger boy, and will never

leave you, even when you are men.

Such lessons as these, given at proper times and when the infant mind

is in a fit state to receive them, will do more to prevent what you

wish to avoid, than any thing which could be possibly done at a more

advanced age; this is indeed moral training, and when such is given

generally in infant schools, we may look forward to a generation very

superior to the present, in the genuine parts of Christianity, and in

every moral and social virtue.

The beneficial results of moral training have been practically shown

in every infant school where the subject has been properly understood

and carried out, and numerous anecdotes illustrative of its beneficial

effects might be here introduced, which would convince those who have

any doubt on the subject, of the good effects of exercising kindness

and consideration for others, in opposition to reckless mischief,

hardheartedness, and cruelty, vices which render the lower orders

dangerous and formidable; but as a complete collection of such

anecdotes would form in themselves a volume, we will for the present

lay before our readers a few taken at random, to illustrate the

subject; they are from the appendix of the first report of the

Edinburgh Infant School Society, the model school of which was

organized by the author of this book.

"Two of the children, brothers, about five and four years of age,

coming one morning late into school, were to go to their seats without

censure, if they could give an account of what they had been doing,

which should be declared satisfactory by the whole school, who should

decide; they stated separately that they had been contemplating

the proceedings of a large caterpillar, and noticing the different

positions of its body as it crossed their path, that it was now

horizontal, and now perpendicular, and presently curved, and finally

inclined, when it escaped into a tree. The master then asked them

abruptly, Why did you not kill it? The children stared. \_Could\_ you

have killed it? asked the teacher. Yes, but that would have been

cruel and naughty, and a sin against God. The little moralists were

acquitted by acclamation; having, infants as they were, manifested a

character which, were it universal in the juvenile population, would

in another generation reduce our moral code to a mass of waste paper,

in one grand department of its bulk.

"This anecdote illustrates the good effect of inculcating into the

infant mind an abhorrence of cruelty to animals, which is too often a

seed sown in the young heart, which goes on increasing daily with

the growth of the child, until a fearful career of crime is ended by

murder, and its necessary expiation on the scaffold. How many men who

have suffered death for murder, could date their first steps towards

it, from the time when in infancy they tortured a fly, or spun a

cock-chaffer.

"The teacher mentioned to the children one day, that he had been

occupied about a boy and a girl who had no father or mother, and whose

grandfather and grandmother, who took care of them, were bed-rid and

in great poverty. The boy was seven years of age, too old for the

infant school, but some gentlemen, he said, were exerting themselves

to get the boy into one of the hospitals. Here he purposely stopped

to try the sympathies of his audience for the girl. He was not

disappointed, several little voices called out at once, '\_Oh! master!\_

What for no the lassie too?' he assured them the girl was to come to

the infant school, and to be boarded there; which intelligence was

received with loud plaudits."

Here we see the seeds of philanthropy sown in the young mind,

beginning, even in infancy, to burst and blossom forth, giving promise

in after years of a glorious and abundant harvest. The germ of love

and mercy is in every breast, and cannot fail to be developed, if

early called into action; and by the blessing of Almighty God, who

is the great First Cause of all good results, the day is fast

approaching, yea, is now at hand, when the fierce passions, the love

of self, the long catalogues of debasing crimes, which have so long

disgraced human nature, will give way before a golden age of true

Christianity; when man will not be arrayed against his fellow-men, but

all will go hand in hand together in the bond of love, seeking to do

good, and to accomplish the purposes for which they were created by an

all-wise and all-benevolent God.

The following anecdote illustrates the subject still further:--

"One day, when the children were in the play-ground, four boys

occupied the boys' circular swing, while a stranger gentleman was

looking on with the teacher. Conscious of being looked at, the little

fellows were wheeling round with more than usual swiftness and

dexterity, when a little creature of two or three years made a sudden

dart forward into their very orbit, and in an instant must have

been knocked down with great force. With a presence of mind and

consideration, and with a mechanical skill,--which to admire most we

knew not, one of the boys, about five years old, used the instant of

time in which the singular movement was practicable, threw his whole

body into a horizontal position, and went clear over the infant's

head. But this was not all; in the same well employed instant it

occurred to him that that movement was not enough to save the little

intruder, as he himself was to be followed as quick as thought by the

next swinger; for this he provided, by dropping his own feet to the

ground, and stopping the whole machine the instant he had cleared the

child's head. The spectator of this admirable specimen of intellect

and good feeling, which was all necessarily the thought and act of a

moment, had his hand instinctively in his pocket for a shilling, but

was stopped by the teacher, who disowns all inferior motives for acts

of kindness and justice. The little hero, however, had his reward,

for the incident was related by the teacher in a full school, in the

presence of the strangers, and was received with several rounds of

hearty applause."

We will quote another anecdote illustrative of the good effects of

exercising the kindly feelings.

J.J. accused H.S. of having eaten up J.J.'s dinner. It was proved by

several witnesses that H.S. not only appropriated the dinner, but used

force: the charge being proved to the satisfaction of the \_jury\_ (the

whole school), the same tribunal were requested by the teacher to

decide what should be the consequence to the convict. One orator rose,

and suggested that as H.S. had not yet eat his own dinner, he ought

to give it to J.J. This motion, for the children always welcome

any reasonable substitute for corporal punishment, was carried by

acclamation. When one o'clock came, and the dinner was handed over,

"\_coram publico\_," to J.J., H.S. was observed by him to be in tears,

and lingering near his \_own\_ dinner. They were by this time nearly

done, but the teacher was watching the result. The tears were too much

for J.J., who went to H.S., threw his arms round his neck, told him

not to cry, but to sit down and take half. This invitation was of

course accepted by H.S., who manifested a great inferiority of

character to the other, and furnished an example of the blindness of

the unjust to the justice of retribution, which they always feel to

mere revenge and cruelty. He could not bear to see J.J. even sharing

\_his\_ dinner, and told him with bitterness that he would tell his

mother. "Weel, weel!" said the generous child, "I'll gin y'd a'

back again." Of course the teacher interfered to prevent this gross

injustice, and in the afternoon made their school-fellows perfectly

aware of the part each had acted. It is not easy to render a character

like H.S. liberal, but a long course of such practice, for precept is

impotent in such cases, might modify what in after life would have

turned out a selfish, unjust, and unsocial character.

This selfish principle it is the great object of moral training to

combat against. We may trace almost all the misery in the world to it;

and until it ceases to exist to the extent which it now does, little

can be done to accomplish any good or great purpose. But lessons like

the above, and received into the infant mind when in a receptive

state, will, if proper advantage be taken of their occurrence, prove

in the hands of the Almighty a powerful engine for the removal of

selfishness; and we know of no method so effectual to accomplish this

object as the drawing infants into societies, which is done only in

infant schools.

The following anecdote, bearing on the same subject, came under the

observation of the author of this work, very early in his labour for

the extension of his system. He gives it here in the same words as he

communicated it to a friend at the time of its occurrence.

A few days since I went to the Boston Street school; the children were

in the gallery, and the moment I entered, they rose to receive me.

When the school was over, the children came around me, as they usually

do, saying, When will you come again? and so on. I told them I could

not tell, but that I would come as soon as I could. This answer would

not satisfy them, and I talked to them until near six o'clock in

the evening. One little girl, about four years old, kept looking

stedfastly at me the whole time, not letting a single word or gesture

escape her notice. At last I finished my observations, and desired the

children to go. The infant in question immediately took hold of my

hand, and said, "We shall never see you any more, you must come home

with me." I replied, "What do you want me to go home for?" The child

answered, "I have nothing to give you, but if you will come home

mother will give you some tea." I patted the child on the head,

telling it I could not go. The child went home, as I thought, and I

remained some time talking to one of the ladies of the committee. On

walking down the street I saw the same child crying bitterly, and

surrounded by many other children. On inquiring the cause, I received

for answer, "\_You would not come home to tea\_." If only one half the

invitations that are given amongst \_men\_ were given with as much

sincerity and disinterestedness as was manifested by this \_infant\_,

I am much mistaken if we should not see a very different state of

\_society\_.

"Moral education," writes Mr. Simpson in his "Philosophy of

Education," "embraces both the animal and moral impulses. It regulates

the former, and strengthens the latter, whenever gluttony, indelicacy,

violence, cruelty, greediness, cowardice, pride, insolence, vanity,

or any mode of selfishness shew themselves in the individual under

training, one and all must be repressed with the most watchful

solicitude, and the most skilful treatment. Repression may at first

fail to be accomplished, unless by severity; but the instructor

sufficiently enlightened in the faculties, will, in the first

practicable moment, drop the coercive system, and awaken and appeal

powerfully to the higher faculties of conscience and benevolence, and

to the powers of reflection: this, done with kindness, in other words,

with a marked manifestation of benevolence itself, will operate with

a power, the extent of which in education is yet, to a very limited

extent, estimated. In the very exercise of the superior faculties the

inferior are indirectly acquiring a habit of restraint and regulation;

for it is morally impossible to cultivate the superior faculties

without a simultaneous though indirect regulation of the inferior."

It is indeed a melancholy truth, that moral training is yet, to a very

limited extent, estimated, and this is mainly owing to its not being

understood by the generality of those selected for the office of

teachers of infants, nor can it be expected that persons of sufficient

intellect and talent to comprehend and carry out this great object,

can be procured, until a sufficient remuneration is held out to them,

to make it worth their while to devote their whole energies to the

subject. It is a fatal error to suppose that mere girls, taken perhaps

from some laborious occupation, and whose sum total of education

consists of reading and writing, can carry out views which it requires

a philosophical mind, well stored with liberal ideas and general

knowledge, to effect. They may be able to instruct the children in

the mere mechanical part of the system; and as long as they confine

themselves to this, they will go on capitally, but no further than

this can they go; and though the children may appear to a casual

visitor, to be very nicely instructed, and very wonderful little

creatures, on a closer examination they will be found mere automatons;

and then, without a thought on the subject, the system will be blamed,

without once considering that the most perfect figure of mechanism

will not work properly in any hands, except those that thoroughly

understand it.

Enough may have now been said on this subject, and my earnest prayer

is, that by God's help, these remarks may produce beneficial results;

and if my endeavours to make the subject of moral instruction more

easily understood, and to demonstrate its importance as clearly as

possible are successful, the results will soon shew me that the hard

labour of three-and-thirty years has not been entirely in vain, and

this will be to me a greater reward than all the praise, distinction,

and honour that it is in man's power to confer.

Whenever an infant is detected in any of those animal impulses, to

regulate which is the great end of moral training, a gallery lesson

should be immediately given, having a tendency to excite an abhorrence

of the fault on the minds of all the children. An opportunity of this

description should never be let pass. These are the very best times

to implant virtuous and moral sentiments in the minds of the young

pupils. These are the golden opportunities of bringing into action

the higher faculties of conscience and benevolence, and the powers of

reflection.

If an instance of the too prevalent cruelty of the young to animals

be detected, which often occurs from mere thoughtlessness, it may be

prevented from again occurring by a few lessons like the one which we

have given as a specimen. The same means may be taken for crushing the

rudiments of gluttony, violence, pride, deceit, or any other vice. The

gallery is the proper place for these lessons; and after the matter

has been thoroughly \_sifted\_ in the play-ground, or wherever else it

has occurred, the children should then be marched to the gallery, to

receive a proper instruction on the subject. Cruelty, on the part of

boys, is too prevalent; it is energy, enterprise, and high animal

spirit, not legislated for on the part of parents and teachers, which

descends to cruelty, first to animals, then to all which has life,

that cannot defend itself. Children soon learn to distinguish those

children and animals, who can, and will, resent cruelty, from those

who will not; and therefore, speculate on the results accordingly, and

become self-taught up to this point. A child should never be without a

kind and wise guide at this period; that which in itself descends

to evil, for the want of a moral guide, may be turned to good. The

faculties mentioned, cannot be extinguished, but can be regulated.

This is the office of the teacher. Too frequently we try to crush the

powers that early want training and regulating. The same powers which

run to vice, may be trained to virtue, but the activities cannot, and

ought not, to be kept too much in abeyance.

Children are not naturally cruel, although they differ much in the

propensity to annoy and reduce animals and each other under their

individual control; the passive submit at once, but the energetic will

not; it is then that the active assailant learns an important lesson,

which can only be learned in society, and which to him, is of great

importance. The difficulty on the part of the teacher, is to know

when to interfere, and when to let alone. I have often erred by

interference, of this I am quite satisfied; the anxiety to prevent

evil, has caused me to interfere too soon, by not giving time to the

pupil fully to develops his act. I hope others will profit from this;

it requires much practice and long study of different temperaments, in

children, to know when to let alone and when to interfere; but certain

it is, that the moral faculties can and must be developed, in any

system worthy of the name of education. Other vices beside cruelty are

to be found in children. Moral training applies to these, and none are

left to run their own course. Why should they? What are schools for?

but to form the virtuous character--the being who can command self

control--the orderly character, the good citizen, and, the being who

fears and loves God. Ends less than these, cannot be worthy of the

efforts of the philanthropist and the truly religious man.

There is another idea which has long been in my mind, and which I

hope some day to see carried into practice, viz., a Religious Service

adapted for children, in our various places of worship. No accurate

observer of the young in churches during divine service, can have

failed to witness the inattention of the numbers of children who are

assembled on such occasions. The service is too long and inappropriate

for them, as is also the sermon. It is addressed to adults, and

sometimes the terms used by the preacher, is Greek to half the adults,

in agricultural districts. Men cannot be too simple with the young and

illiterate; there is much room for improvement in these things, and

with regard to the young, I can answer for them that, if they are

addressed in proper language, which they can understand, and are

supplied with proper religious food for the understanding, suitable to

its state of receptivity, and, if I may say, digestive powers; they,

as a body, will shew us an example which will surprise many. With

regard to the Church, there might be taken from the Prayer Book, a

simple service adapted to the purpose. I am certain I could do it with

ease, as I know what is adapted for children, or at least I ought

to do. The next point, all the preachers should be men of peculiar

temperament and great simplicity of manner. I do not care how learned

they are; the more learned, the better; but it, need not be in

languages but in spiritual things. There are thousands of passages

in the Holy Word which are adapted, and I think, intended for the

purpose, and there are many men now living who are able to do the

thing, and more will be raised up. One thing, however, must not be

forgotten, they must be \_men advanced\_ in life, not \_lads\_. To teach

natural things properly to children, requires more knowledge than the

generality of the public suppose. The younger the children are, the

more knowledge it requires on the part of the instructor. But to teach

spiritual things properly to children, men cannot know too much,

provided they have the power to simplify that knowledge and reduce it

to practice. An evening service will not do for children, it must

be either in the morning or the middle of the day. So fully am I

impressed with the importance of this idea, that I am determined

shortly to take means to carry it out.

CHAPTER X.

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

\_Necessity of some punishment--Rewards to Monitors--Trial by

Jury--Illustrative case--Necessity of firmness--Anecdotes--Playing

the truant--Its evils--Means for prevention--Devices for

punishment--Sympathy encouraged--Evil of expelling children--Case of

Hartly--Difficulty of legislating for rewards and punishments--Badge

of distinction not necessary\_.

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How does the Deity deal with His creatures, on this momentous

question? This is the question which every thinker--and every

religious man, must ask himself; and then, act accordingly.

\* \* \* \* \*

As man comes into the world with a propensity to do that which is

forbidden, it has been found necessary at all times, to enact laws to

govern and even to punish him, when he acts contrary to them; and

who will deny the man a just reward who has done any act whereby his

fellow-men have been benefitted? "The hope of reward sweetens labour."

If, then, rewards and punishments are necessary to make \_men\_ active,

and to keep them in order, how can it be expected that children can be

governed without some kind of punishment? I am aware that I am taking

the unpopular side of the question, by becoming an advocate for

punishment, but notwithstanding this, I must say, that I think no

school in England has ever been governed without it; and that the

many theories ushered into the world, on this subject, have not been

exactly acted upon. And since this was written I am in a position to

state the same with regard to both Scotland and Ireland. Indeed, it

appears to me, that while men continue to be imperfect beings, it is

not possible that either they or their offspring, can be governed

without some degree of punishment. I admit that it should be

administered with great prudence, and never employed but as a last

resource; and I am sorry to say, that it has descended to brutality in

some schools, which, perhaps, is one reason why so many persons set

their faces against it altogether. I might write as others have done,

by stating that I had brought up a family of my own without ever

having struck even once any of my children, but then this is no

argument for the general conducting of a school; in school, children

are spoiled before they come to you, in a family the judicious parent

begins at the beginning, the cases therefore entirely differ.

The first thing that appears to me necessary, is to find out, if

possible, the real disposition and temper of a child, in order to be

able to manage it with good effect. I will allow that it is possible

to govern some children without corporal punishment, for I have had

some under my charge whom I never had occasion to punish, to whom a

word was quite sufficient, and who, if I only looked displeased, would

burst into tears. But I have had others quite the reverse; you might

talk to them till you were tired, and it would produce no more effect

half an hour afterwards, than if they had not been spoken to at all.

Indeed, children's dispositions are as various as their faces; no two

are alike; consequently, what will do for one child will not do for

another; and hence the impropriety of having an invariable mode of

punishment. What should we think of a medical man who was to prescribe

for every constitution in the same manner? The first thing a skilful

physician does, is to ascertain the constitution of the patient, and

then he prescribes accordingly; and nothing is more necessary for

those who have charge of little children, than to ascertain their real

character. Raving done this, they will be able, should a child offend,

to apply some appropriate antidote.

To begin with rewards: to the monitors I have generally allowed one

penny a week each, as I found much difficulty in procuring monitors;

for, whatever honours were attached to the office, children of five

years old could not exactly comprehend them. They could much more

easily perceive the use of a penny; and as a proof how much they

valued the penny a week above all the honours that could be bestowed,

I always had a good supply of monitors after this remuneration was

adopted. Before this time, they used to say, "Please, sir, may I sit

down? I do not like to be a monitor." Perhaps I might prevail on some

to hold the office a little longer, by explaining to them what an

honourable office it was: but after all, I found that the penny a week

spoke more powerfully than I did, and the children would say to each

other, "I like to be a monitor now, for I had a penny last Saturday;

and master says, we are to have a penny every week; don't you wish you

were a monitor?" "Yes, I do; and master says, if I am a good boy, I

shall be a monitor by and bye, and then I shall have a penny." I think

they richly deserve it. Some kind of reward I consider necessary, but

what kind of reward, must, of course, rest entirely with the promoters

of the different schools.[A]

[Footnote A: In many of the infant schools I hull visited, I found the

spelling and reading very much neglected, that neither the monitors

nor children look at the lessons, but merely say them by rote; if the

monitors are punished for inattention they wish to give up the office,

because there is no reward attached to it; but if there is a reward

attached to it of any kind, the children have sense enough to see that

the thing is fairly balanced, for if they are rewarded for doing their

duty they see no injustice in being punished for neglecting it.]

Perhaps nothing would tend more to the order and efficient conducting

of an infant school, than the plan of giving rewards to the monitors.

From the part they take in teaching and superintending others, it

seems due to them,--for the labourer is worthy of his hire. If we are

to make use of monitors at all, I am now convinced that they \_must\_ be

rewarded; parents do not like their children to work for nothing,

and when they become useful, they are taken away entirely, unless

rewarded. The training system uses monitors only in that which is

purely mechanical; or, to infuse into the external memory that which

is to be learned by rote, singly or simultaneously, by the pupils,

such as chapters out of the Scriptures, catechisms, creeds, poetry,

psalms, hymns, prayers, and commandments, and whatever is (as it is

called) to be learned by heart, but to develope the faculties of the

pupils--to really teach religion, morals, intellectuals, or anything

which applies to the interior of the pupils, they are useless.

A most important means of discipline appears in what we term "trial

by jury," which is composed of all the children in the school. It has

been already stated that the play-ground is the scene for the

full development of character, and, consequently, the spot where

circumstances occur which demand this peculiar treatment. It should

also be particularly observed, that it is next to prayer in solemnity,

and should only be adopted on extraordinary occasions. Any levity

manifested either by the teacher or the pupils will be fatal to the

effect. But to illustrate it, I will state a fact. In the play-ground

of an Infant School there was an early dwarf cherry-tree, which, from

its situation, had fruit, while other trees had only flowers. It

became, therefore, an object of general attention, and ordinarily

called forth a variety of important observations. Now it happened that

two children, one five years of age, and the other not quite three,

entered the school in the autumn, and on the return of spring, they,

having had only a winter's training, were charmed by this object, and

in consequence fell into temptation. Accustomed to watch new scholars

narrowly, I particularly observed them; when I marked the elder one

anxiously, intently, and wishfully gazing on the fruit, and especially

on one amazingly large cherry pendent from a single shoot. While thus

absorbed, the younger child was attracted to the spot, and imitated

his example. The former then asked if he did not think it a large one,

and the reply was of course, in the affirmative. Having thus addressed

the powers of observation, the next appeal was to the taste, by the

inquiry, "Is not it a nice one?" The answer to which was, "Yes." Then

followed the observation, "It is quite soft," when the young one,

being thus excited by the touch of the other, touched it also. This

act, he subsequently repeated, by desire of the elder, who, having

charged him to hold it tight, struck his hand, and thus detached the

cherry. I now withdrew to some distance, and it was evident that the

little one was distressed by what he had done, as he did not eat it,

but began to cry faintly, on which the elder took the cherry out of

his hand, and ate it. This increased the crying, when, on approaching,

he ran up to me, saying that the other took my cherry. The little one

continuing to cry, the other stated that he saw him take it; to which

I replied, "We will try him by and bye." As soon, therefore, as the

proper time arrived, the bell was rung; prior to which, however, I was

apprised of the loss by several children, and when all were seated in

the gallery, I proceeded as follows "Now, little children, I want you

to use all your faculties, to look at me attentively, and to think

of what I am about to say, for I am going to tell you a tale of two

little boys. Once on a time they were amusing themselves with a great

many other children in a play-ground, where there was a great many

flowers and some fruit trees. But before I go on, let me ask you is it

right to take the flowers or fruit which belong to others?" to which

the general reply was "No," with the exception of the culprits. I then

described their age, stated that one boy was five years old, and the

other three; that the former was looking at one of his master's fine

cherries, which was growing against the wall, and that the latter

approached, and looked at it too; on which several exclaimed, "Please,

sir, your big cherry is gone;" which caused an inspection of each

others' countenances. To this, I replied, "I am sorry for it, but let

me finish my tale. Now, children, while they were both looking at the

cherry, the older one asked the younger if it were not large, to which

he replied, 'Yes;' he then inquired, whether it were not nice, when

he again answered, 'Yes;' afterwards, be told him, having touched it

himself first, to touch it because it was soft, and the little boy

unfortunately did so, on which the big one pulled his arm, and the

cherry came off in his hand." While this was proceeding, the two

delinquents sat very demurely, conscious that they were pourtrayed,

though all the rest were ignorant of the fact. I then said, "Which

do you think the worst of these boys?" when several answered, "The

biggest was the worst." On inquiring, "Why?" the reply was, "Because

he told the little one to take it;" while others said, "Because he

pulled his arm." I added, "I have not told you the whole tale yet, but

I am glad to see that you know right from wrong, and presently you

will be still better prepared to judge. When the big boy had told

the little one to take the cherry, he then robbed him of it, and

immediately betrayed him by telling the master. Now which do you think

was the worst?" When a great number of voices vociferated, "The big

one." I then inquired, if they thought we had such children in our

school? the general reply was 'No;' but the scrutiny among themselves

was redoubled. To this I rejoined, "I am sorry to say such children

are now sitting among you in the gallery." At this crisis the little

one burst into tears, on which the children said, "Please, sir, that's

one of them, for his face is so red, and he cries." I answered, "I am

sorry it is so," and called the culprit down with "Come here, my dear,

and sit by the side of me until we examine into it." This was followed

by the outcry, "Please, sir, we have found the other, he hangs his

head down, and his face looks so white."

This child was then called down in the same mild manner to sit on the

other side of me. I then told them, that they would find, when they

became men and women, that in our courts of law, witnesses of what was

done were called, and as the elder boy had seen the young one take the

cherry, it was necessary and desireable to hear what he had to say. On

being desired to stand up, I therefore said, "Did you see him take the

cherry?" To which he promptly replied, "Yes." The next inquiry was,

"What did he do with it?" To this he was silent, on which the little

one, not being able to contain himself, called out, "He took it from

me, and ate it." All eyes were now turned to the big one, and all felt

convinced that he was the most guilty, whilst the confidence of the

little one increased by the prospect of having justice done him, as he

previously feared that being accused by the elder one, he should be

condemned without ceremony.

Finding that the elder one had no more to say, it only remained to

hear the defence of the young one, who, sensible of having done what

was wrong, said, in broken accents, "He told me to take it,--he hit my

hand,--and he ate the cherry." To which it was necessary to give the

admonition, That he never ought to do wrong, though required to do so

by others; and that such a defence would avail him nothing were he a

man. Both the children were now exceedingly distressed, and hence

this was the time to appeal to the rest, as to the measure of the

punishment that was due. The general opinion was, that the eldest

should be punished, but no one mentioned that the young one should

even have a pat on the hand; the next thing was to appeal to the

higher faculties of the little culprit, who, seeing that he had thus

far got off, required to be softened down in reference to the other,

though he had betrayed him, while the best way of operating on the

elder was a display of love on the part of the younger; he was

therefore asked if he would forgive the other, and shake hands with

him, which he immediately did, to the evident delight and satisfaction

of all the children, while the countenance of the elder showed that he

felt himself unworthy of the treatment he received. I then inflicted

the sentence which had been pronounced,--two pats of the hand, which

the girls asked might be soft ones, and sent him to his seat, while I

concluded the whole with some appropriate exhortations. It is pleasing

to add that the elder proved one of the most useful monitors I ever

had.[A]

[Footnote A: This mode of treatment has succeeded in a number of

instances, several first-rate writers on education have tried it, and

have found it work well; it is one of the most effective methods to

operate upon the minds of young children that I have been able to

discover: I have tried the plan with older children with great

success. Reader! can teachers, who are mere boys and girls, act thus,

in such a case?]

Should any person be disposed to object to such a process, they may

be reminded that the Infant System deals with children as rational

creatures, and is designed to prepare them for future life. I have

seen numerous instances of its beneficial effects? these have induced

me to pursue the plan, and in the strongest terms to recommend it to

others. In all cases, the matter should be stated to the children

simply, calmly, and slowly, and they will seldom, if ever, come to a

wrong conclusion.

A manual trade, or a business, which requires dexterity can never be

learnt from books alone, or properly understood from mere precepts.

All must be acquired by practice, and then the knowledge of it

becomes, as it were, a part of our very selves. The same applies to

the precepts of morality. If they be merely committed to memory

by rote, they will often lie there cold and inactive, and not

unfrequently tend even to harden the feelings. But when they are

brought out into actual practice, and made to bear upon the conscience

of the culprit, and on the moral feelings of all the children through

him, they are seen in a new and convincing light, and learnt with a

power that will impress them indelibly on the memory. "Nathan said

unto David, Thou art the man." The most effectual teaching of a

christian parent is not at the time of the mere infusion of moral

truth into a child's mind, but in the example he gives in his life,

and the direction he gives according to it to his child when he "walks

by the way" and when he "sits in the house." Such should be the

teaching aimed at in every infant school. How wise are the dealings of

the creator with us on the subject of reward. What being ever yet did

good, who did not feel within a certain reward? Who felt most of the

influence of the Holy Spirit? the passers by,--or the good Samaritan?

Nay! who felt the greatest reward in his own breast, the Samaritan

himself, or the man who fell amongst thieves? I think the Samaritan.

Throughout all creation we see rewards; for assiduity, "the early crow

gets the worms; the cautious animal escapes his enemies; the good

man enjoys the most happiness; out of goodness happiness cannot be

found;--virtue brings its own reward;" obedience to the natural laws

does the same, so does obedience to the spiritual laws bring such

rewards as my pen cannot describe, but, I doubt not, many have felt

them. The whole system of society appears to me to depend upon this

stimulant. Who would wish to be the heads of the church and take

the additional responsibilites and labours attached to them without

reward? Who would accept the office, the weighty office of being Her

Majesty's ministers without reward? I might go on in this strain of

reasoning and prove that rewards are founded in knowledge of human

nature; but I am content to skew we have some ground for them, they

are useful, if not essential, in the right management of the young,

but, like every thing else, require to be managed judiciously. It

appears to me that the argument to the contrary would be untenable.

I should like to see the man who would invest his capital in

railways--electric telegraphs, steam ships, and in business of any

kind, without hope of reward, pooh! it is the mainspring of human

action, the incentive to public service, it rests not in this world

but follows us to the next, "Well done, good and faithful servant,

enter into the joy of thy Lord." Ah! but this refers to men, not to

children. What are children but men in embryo? Why be unjust to them,

and just to man. I say rewards are necessary in a sound system of

education to little children; if judiciously selected and properly

applied, they will be found incentives to action, and add greatly to

the pleasure of learning. In my other work for the education of older

children, this subject is treated of more at length as applicable to

them.

With regard to punishments, they are various, and must be adapted to

the disposition of the child. The only corporal punishment that we

inflict is a pat on the hand, which is very of great service in

flagrant cases of misconduct. For instance, I have seen one child

bite another's arm, until it has almost made its teeth meet. I should

suppose few persons are prepared to say, such a child should not be

punished for it. I have seen others who, when they first came to

school, would begin to scream as if they were being punished, as soon

as their mother brought them to the door, while the mother continued

to threaten the child without ever putting one threat into execution.

The origin of all this noise, has been, perhaps, because the child has

demanded a half-penny, as the condition of coming to school, and the

mother probably has not had one to give him, but has actually been

obliged to borrow one in order to induce him to come in at the school

door. Thus the child has come off conqueror, and set it down as a

maxim, that, for the future, he may do just as he pleases with his

mother. I have sometimes made my appearance at this time, to know what

all the noise was about, when the mother has entered into a lamentable

tale, telling me what trouble she has had with the child, and that he

would not come to school without having a half-penny each time. But

the moment the child has seen me, all has been as quiet as possible.

I have desired him to give me the half-penny, which he has done

directly, I have returned it to the mother, and the child has gone

into school, as quietly as any child could do. I have had others who

would throw their victuals into the dirt, and then lie down in it

themselves, and refuse to rise up, crying, "I will go home; I want

to go into the fields; I will have a half-penny." The mother has

answered, "Well, my dear, you shall have a half-penny, if you will

stay at school." "No, I want to go and play with Billy or Tommy;" and

the mother at length has taken the churl home again, and thus fed his

vanity and nursed his pride, till he has completely mastered her, so

that she has been glad to apply to the school again, and beg that I

would take him in hand.

At another time a girl came with a pillow; she had insisted on having

it for a doll; but, so far from contributing to her happiness, it had

a contrary effect. Nevertheless, the parent, for want of that firmness

so necessary in the management of children, had allowed her to bring

it to school, and on her journey she cried all the way, to the

amusement of the lookers on. When I remonstrated with the mother, she

replied, "What could I do? she would not come without it" The child,

however, gave it up to me without any trouble, and the over \_indulgent

mother\_ took it back with her. Numerous have been the instances of a

similar kind; and all far the want of firmness.

The master of an infant school, whenever opportunity occurs, should

feel it incumbent upon him to urge the parents to make a due use of

judicious parental authority. This is the very foundation of all

social order, rule, and government, and to relax it is to loosen the

very keystone of society. He ought also perpetually to inculcate

obedience to their parents upon the children, as being one of their

first and most important duties. Some have objected to our schools,

that they are calculated to loosen the ties and the authority between

parent and child; but if these precepts are carefully attended to, the

result will be precisely the reverse. It is, however, necessary to

state, in the three cases just noticed, that in each, the children had

been previously conquered by me, and young as they were, they knew

quite well that, although such conduct as they exhibited gained the

end they had in view with the parent, similar conduct would not

succeed with me. It is little short of cruelty to let any child have

its own way in such matters. They will always try hard to get the

tipper hand, not knowing but that such conduct adds to their own

happiness. When once conquered, and proof is afforded that it does

not, then the children are always thankful for the discipline. At all

events, I have never found it otherwise. Many, I may say numerous

cases, have occurred of worse kinds than the above, such as children

insisting on bringing something from home, as the bellows, tongs,

poker, the mother's bonnet, father's hat, &c., as the condition of

coming to school, which the simple parent has complied with rather

than adopt the required firmness, which is essential in matters of

this kind. More infants know quite well the weak and the strong

points of a parent's character, they all are excellent judges on this

subject.

I found it necessary, under such circumstances, to enter into a kind

of agreement with the mother, that she should not interfere in any

respect whatever: that on such conditions, and such only, could the

child be admitted; observing, that I should act towards it as if it

were my own, but that it must and should be obedient to me; to which

the mother has consented, and the child has been taken in again; and,

strange to say, in less than a fortnight, has been as good, and has

behaved as orderly as any child in the school. But I should deem

myself guilty of duplicity and deceit, were I to say that such

children, in all cases could be managed without corporal punishment,

as it appears to me, that this, in moderation, has been the mode of

correcting refractory children, from the earliest ages; for it is

expressly said in the Scriptures, "\_He that spareth his rod, hateth

his son, but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes\_;" and again,

"\_He that knoweth his Lord's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten

with many stripes\_." There is certainly something very pleasing in the

sound, that several hundred infant children may be well managed, kept

in good order, and corrected of their bad habits, without \_any sort\_

of punishment. But as I have not been able to attain to that state of

perfection in the art of teaching, I shall lay before the reader what

modes of punishment I have adopted, and the success that attended

them.

If punishments be judiciously and justly applied, when offences

require them, from the earliest periods of life, they will soon cease

to be wanted. We cannot form a more important association in the

young mind than one between pain and moral evil, and this judicious

correction will effect. It should not be given in anger, or it will

have the appearance of revenge; but if administered calmly and with

feelings of sorrow and regret, it will soon exercise a mighty moral

influence. The providence of God applies to us the correction of

sickness, pain, and sorrow, to withdraw us from evil; and thus in His

moral government, as well as in His Word, He commands us to use the

rod; but always for good, and never in anger or cruelty. Recent events

have proved to me that there is a mawkish sentimentality but too

prevalent on this subject abroad, which interferes greatly with moral

training, the proper freedom of the school-master, and even with the

administration of public justice.

The first offence deserving punishment which I shall notice, is

playing the truant; and I trust I may be permitted to state, that

notwithstanding the children are so very young, they frequently, at

first, stay away from the school, unknown to their parents; nor is

this to be wondered at, when we consider how they have been permitted

to range the streets, and get acquainted with other children in

similar circumstances. When this is the case, they cannot be brought

into order in a moment; it is a work of time, and requires much

patience and perseverance to accomplish it effectually. It is well

known that when we accustom ourselves to particular company, and form

acquaintances, it is no easy matter to give them up; and it is a

maxim, that a man is either better or worse for the company he keeps.

Just so it is with children; they form very early attachments, and

frequently with children whose parents will not send them to school,

and care not where they are, so long as they keep out of their way.

Hence such children will persuade others to accompany them, and of

course they will be absent from school; but as night approaches, the

child will begin to think of the consequences, and mention it to his

companions; who will instruct him how to deceive both his teachers and

his parents, and perhaps bring him through his trouble. This will give

him fresh confidence, and finding himself successful, there will be

little difficulty in persuading him to accompany them a second time. I

have had children absent from school two or three half-days in a

week, and sometimes whole days, who have brought me such rational and

plausible excuses as completely to put me off my guard, but who have

been found out by their parents from having stayed out till seven or

eight o'clock at night. The parents have applied at the school to know

why they kept the children so late, add have then in formed me that

they have been absent all day. Thus the whole plot has been developed;

it has been found that the children were sent to school at eight

o'clock in the morning, and had their dinners given them to eat at

school, but instead of coming they have got into company with their

older companions, who, in many cases, I have found were training them

up for every species of vice. Some of them have been cured of truant

playing by corporal punishment, when all other means I could devise

have failed, others by means the most simple, such as causing the

child to hold a broom for a given time.

The most powerful punishment I have yet discovered is to insist on the

child sitting still, without moving hand or foot for a given time,

say half an hour at most. Long punishment always has the tendency to

harden the child; he soon gets contented in his situation, and you

defeat your own object.

By keeping a strict eye upon them it will be remarked, they soon begin

to form an attachment with some of their own school-fellows, and

ultimately become as fond of their new companions, their books, and

their school, as they were before of their old companions and the

streets. I need scarcely observe, how strong our attachments, formed

in early years at school, are, and I doubt not but many who read this

have found a valuable and real friend in a school-fellow for whom they

would do any thing within their power.

There were several children in the school who had contracted some

very bad habits, entirely by their being accustomed to run about the

streets; and one boy in particular, only five years of age, was so

frequently absent, and brought such reasonable excuses for his being

so, that it was some time before I detected him. I thought it best to

see his mother, and therefore sent the boy to tell her that I wished

her to come. The boy soon returned, saying his mother was not at home.

The following morning he was absent again, and I sent another boy to

know the reason, when the mother waited on me immediately, and assured

me that she had sent the child to school. I then produced the slate

which I kept for that purpose, and informed her how many days and

half-days her child had been absent during the last month, when she

again assured me that she had never kept the child at home for a

single half-day, nor had he ever told her that I wanted to see her; at

the same time observing that be must have been decoyed away by some of

the children in the neighbourhood. She regretted that she could not

afford to send him to school before, adding, \_that the Infant School

was a blessed institution, and one, she thought, much wanted in the

neighbourhood\_. I need scarcely add, that both the father and mother

lost no time in searching for their child, and after several hours,

they found him in the nearest fruit-market with several children,

pretty well stored with apples, &c., which they had, no doubt, stolen

from the fruit-baskets continually placed there. They brought him to

the school, and informed me they had given him a good flogging, which

I found to be correct from the marks that were on the child. This,

they said, they had no doubt would cure him; but he was not so soon

conquered, for the very next day he was absent again; and after the

parents had tried every experiment they could think of, in vain, they

delivered him over to me, telling me I might do what I thought proper.

I tried every means I could devise with as little success, except

keeping him at school after school hours; for I had a great

disinclination to convert the school into a prison, as my object was,

if possible, to cause the children to love the school, and I knew I

could not take a more effectual method of causing them to dislike it

than by keeping them there against their will. At last I tried this

experiment, but to as little purpose as the others, and I was about to

exclude the child altogether as incorrigible; but unwilling that it

should be said a child five years old had mastered us, I at last hit

upon an expedient which had the desired effect. The plan I adopted was

to put him on an elevated situation within sight of all the children,

so secured that he could not hurt himself. I believe it was the force

of \_ridicule\_ that effected the cure. This I had never tried before,

and I must say I was extremely glad to witness it. I never knew him

absent without leave afterwards, and, what is more surprising, he

appeared to be very fond of the school, and became a very good child.

Was not this, then, a brand plucked from the fire?

I have been advised to dismiss twenty such children, rather than

retain them by the above means; but if there be more joy in heaven

over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons

who need no repentance, ought not such a feeling to be encouraged

on earth, particularly when it can be done by means that are not

injurious to the orderly, but, on the contrary, productive of the best

effects? The child just mentioned afterwards went into the National

School, with several others who had been nearly as bad as himself,

but they scarcely ever failed to come and see me when they had a half

holiday, and the master of the school told me that not one of them had

ever been absent without leave, and that he had no fault to find with

them. I have further to observe that the moment I perceived a bad

effect produced by any method of punishment, it was relinquished. But

I feel it my duty here to caution the reader against the too frequent

practice of many to object. It may cost a man many years to find out

what may be desirable and workable; but to become an objector requires

no thought, accordingly the most thoughtless are generally the

greatest objectors.

I believe that there was not a child in the school who would not have

been delighted \_to carry the broom\_, if I had called it play; the

other children might have laughed as long as they pleased, for he

would have laughed as heartily as any of them, and as soon as he had

done, I should have had a dozen applicants, with "Please, sir, may I?

please, sir, may I?" but it was called a \_punishment\_, and hence I had

no applications whatever; they all dreaded it as much as they would

a flogging. I am aware that this plan of punishment may appear

ridiculous, and perhaps it would be so to use it for older children;

but with such young children I have found it to answer well, and

therefore I have no wish to dispense with it. I would, however, have

care taken not to encourage the children to ridicule each other while

undergoing this or any other punishment, except in extraordinary

cases, such as the one I have mentioned; on the contrary, we should

encourage them to sympathize with and comfort a child, as soon as the

punishment is over, and I can truly add, that I do not recollect

a single instance when any child has been undergoing the broom

punishment, but some of the others have come, and attempted to beg

him off, with "Please, sir, may he sit down now?" and when asked the

reason why they wished the little delinquent to be forgiven, they have

answered, "May be, sir, he will be a good boy." Their request has been

complied with, and the culprit forgiven; and what have I seen follow?

Why, that which has taught me an important lesson, and convinced me

that \_children can operate on each other's minds, and be the means of

producing very often better effects than adult people can\_. I have

seen them clasp the child round the neck, take him by the hand, lead

him about the play-ground, comfort him in every possible way, wipe his

eyes with their pinafores, and ask him if he was not sorry for what he

had done. The answer has been, "Yes;" and they have flown to me with,

"Master, he says he is sorry for it, and that he will not do it

again." In short, they have done that which I could not do--they have

so won the child over by kindness, that it has caused the offender not

only to be fond of them, but equally as fond of his master and the

school. To these things I attribute the reclaiming of the children I

have mentioned, and so far from punishment being productive of the

"\_worst effects\_," I have found it productive of the best.

The ill effects of expelling children as incorrigible may be seen in

the case of Hartley, who was executed some years back. He confessed

before his execution that he had been concerned in several murders,

and upwards of two hundred burglaries; and by the newspaper account we

learn that he was dismissed from school at nine years of age, there

being no school master who would be troubled with him, when, finding

himself at liberty, he immediately became a robber. "Hartley's father"

(the account proceeds), "formerly kept the Sir John Falstaff inn at

Hull in Yorkshire; he was put to school in that neighbourhood, but his

conduct at school was so marked with depravity, and so continually did

he play the truant, that he was dismissed as unmanageable. He then,

although only nine years of age, began with pilfering and robbing

gardens and orchards, till his friends were obliged to send him to

sea. He soon contrived to run away from the ship in which he had been

placed, and having regained the land, pursued his old habits, and got

connected with many of the principal thieves in London, with whom he

commenced business regularly as a house-breaker, which was almost

always his line of robbery."

Should not every means have been resorted to with this child before

proceeding to the dangerous mode of expulsion? for it is not the whole

who need a physician, but those who are sick; and I strongly suspect

that if judicious punishment had been resorted to, it would have

had the desired effect. I can only say that there never was a child

expelled from the infant school under my care as incorrigible.

In conclusion, I have to observe, that the broom punishment is only

for extraordinary occasions, and I think we are justified in having

recourse to any means that are consistent with duty and humanity, in

preference to turning a child out into the wide world.

Of all the difficulties I ever had to encounter, to legislate for

rewards and punishments, gave me the most trouble. How often have I

seen one child laugh at that which would make another child cry. If

any department in teaching requires knowledge of character more than

another it is this. Many a fine child's spirits are broken through the

ignorance of teachers and parents in this particular; but for me to

lay down \_invariable rules\_ to manage \_every child\_, would be like a

person undertaking to describe a voyage to the moon. Every person's

own good sense must decide for them according to character and

circumstances; and as to rewards, the same discrimination must be

used. One child will set much value on a little book, whilst another

will destroy it in a day; and though the book might be worth the

sixpence, a half-penny worth of what \_they\_ call good stuff would be

much more valuable. I have had more business done sometimes for a plum

than for a sixpenny book. It is never necessary to give the child

badges of \_distinction\_, and to allow it as many orders and degrees as

an Austrian field-marshal. Crosses at the button holes, and bits

of ribbon on the shoulders are unnecessary; they throw an apple of

discord between the young creatures, who have sense enough to see

that these things are frequently given away with a wonderous lack

of discrimination, and sometimes to please parents more than reward

merit. A carraway comfit put into the mouth of an infant will do more

good than all the badges of distinction that I have mentioned, as a

reward; but with respect to punishment, more will be said on it in

my larger work, when we come to treat of National Education. Each

creation of the most High is truly wonderful, and worthy of our

constant study. We may learn lessons of the truest wisdom from the

meanest leaf or insect, if we would regard it as one of His works. But

how much more may be learnt, and what an amount of useful instruction

may be gained, by a study of the finite mind, the highest work in

creation. Many have turned their attention to minerals, plants, and

animals, and thus added to our stores of knowledge. If equal attention

had been paid to the young mind, to mark the gradual germination of

its intellectual and moral powers, how much more accurate would

our knowledge be of the proper methods of dealing with it both in

instruction, direction, and punishment. Thus to study it has been the

aim of my life, and I have made observations on thousands of children.

When this great and living book is more constantly read, the contents

of this humble volume may have a better chance of being appreciated;

and the utter absurdity of many things palmed upon the public for the

education of infants made glaringly manifest.

CHAPTER XI.

LANGUAGE.

\_Means for conveying instruction--Method of teaching the alphabet

in connection with objects--Spelling--Reading--Developing

lessons--Reading lessons in Natural History--The Arithmeticon--Brass

letters--Their uses\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Without things, words, accumulated by misery in the memory, had far

better die than drag out a miserable existence in the dark. Without

words, theirs stay and support, things unaccountably disappear out of

the storehouse, and may be lost for ever; but bind \_a thing with a

word\_, a strong link, stronger than any steel, and softer than

any silk, and the captive remains for ever happy in its bright

prison-house."--\_Wilson\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

The senses of children having revealed every object in its true light,

they next desire to know its name, and then express their perceptions

in words. This you have to gratify, and from the time you tell them

the name of an object, it is the representative of the thing in the

mind of the child; if the object be not present, but you mention

the name, this suggests it to the infant mind. Had this been more

frequently thought of by instructors, we should have found them less

eager to make the child acquainted with the names of things of which

it has no knowledge or perception. Sounds and signs which give rise

to no idea in the mind, because the child has never seen or known the

things represented, are of no use, and can only burden the memory.

It is, therefore, the object of our system to give the children a

knowledge of things, and then a knowledge of the words which represent

those things. These remarks not only apply to the names of visible

things, but more particularly to those which are abstract. If I would

say, shew a child \_a horse\_, before you tell it the name of the

animal, still more would I urge it on the teacher to let a child see

what love, kindness, religion, &c. are, before it is told what names

to designate those principles by. If our ignorance as to material

things be the result of instructing the children in names, instead of

enabling them to become acquainted with things, so, on the other hand,

I believe we may account, in the same way to some extent, for \_virtue\_

being so frequently a mere word, an empty sound, amongst men, instead

of an active principle.

Our next endeavour is to teach the children to express their thoughts

upon things; and if they are not checked by injudicious treatment,

they will have some on every subject. We first teach them to express

\_their notions\_, we then tell them ours, and truth will prevail even

in the minds of children. On this plan, it will operate by its own

strength, not by the power of coercion, which renders even truth

disagreeable and repulsive; the children will adopt it from choice in

preference to error, and it will be firmly established in their minds.

It will no doubt be perceived, that for the promotion of the

course here recommended, it will be advisable to connect with our

\_alphabetical and reading lessons\_, as much information as we possibly

can. By so doing, the tedium of the task to the child will be

considerably lessened, as well as much knowledge attained. The means

of doing this in a variety of ways will, no doubt, suggest themselves

to the intelligent teacher; but as an illustration of what we mean,

the following conversational plan may not be useless.

We have twenty-six cards, and each card has on it one letter of the

alphabet, and some object in nature; the first, for instance, has the

letter A on the top, and an apple painted on the bottom. The children

are desired to go into the gallery, which is formed of seats, one

above the other, at one end of the school. The master places himself

before the children, so that they can see him, and he them, and being

thus situated, proceeds in the following manner:--

A.

Q. Where am I? A. Opposite to us. Q. What is on the right side of me?

A. A lady. Q. What is on the left side of me? A. A chair. Q. What is

before me? A. A desk. Q. Who is before me? A. We, children. Q. What

do I hold up in my hand? A. A letter A.Q. What word begins with A? A.

Apple. Q. Which hand do I hold it up with? A. With the right hand. Q.

Spell apple.[A] A. A-p-p-l-e. Q. How is an apple produced? A. It grows

on a tree. Q. What part of the tree is in the ground? A. The root. Q.

What is that which comes out of the ground? A. The stem. Q. When

the stem grows up straight, what would you call its position? A.

Perpendicular. Q. What are on the stem? A. Branches. Q. What are on

the branches? A. Leaves. Q. Of what colour are they? A. Green. Q. Is

there any thing else beside leaves on the branches? A. Yes, apples. Q.

What was it before it became an apple? A. Blossom. Q. What part of the

blossom becomes fruit? A. The inside. Q. What becomes of the leaves

of the blossom? A. They fall off the tree. Q. What was it before it

became a blossom? A. A bud. Q. What caused the buds to become larger,

and produce leaves and blossom? A. The sap. Q. What is sap? A. A

juice. Q. How can the sap make the buds larger? A. It comes out of the

root, and goes up the stem. Q. What next? A. Through the branches into

the buds. Q. What do the buds produce? A. Some buds produce leaves,

some blossoms, and some a shoot. Q. What do you mean by a shoot? A.

A young branch, which is green at first, but becomes hard by age. Q.

What part becomes hard first? A. The bottom.

[Footnote A: It is not supposed that all or many of the children will

be able to spell this or many of the subsequent words, or give such

answers as we have put down. But \_some\_ among the older or more acute

of them will soon be able to do so, and thus become instructors to the

rest. It may be proper to mention also that the information in Natural

History, &c. &c., displayed in some of the answers, is the result of

the instructions in Natural History which the children simultaneously

receive, and which is spoken of in a subsequent chapter. Mr. Golt's

simple arrangement of the Alphabet I much approve of, and no doubt it

will come into general use.]

B.

Q. What is this? A. The letter B--the first letter in baker, butter,

bacon, brewer, button, bell, &c., &e. [The teacher can take any of

these names he pleases, for instance, the first:] Children, let me

hear you spell baker. A. B-a-k-e-r. Q. What is a baker? A. A man who

makes bread. Q. What is bread made of? A. It is made of flour, water,

yeast, and a little salt. Q. What is flour made of? A. Wheat. Q. How

is it made? A. Ground to powder in a mill. Q. What makes the mill go

round? A. The wind, if it is a windmill. Q. Are there any other kinds

of mills? A. Yes; mills that go by water, mills that are drawn round

by horses, and mills that go by steam. Q. When the flour and water and

yeast are mixed together, what does the baker do? A. Bake them in an

oven. Q. What is the use of bread? A. For children to eat. Q. Who

causes the corn to grow? A. Almighty God.

C.

Q. What is this? A. It is letter C, the first letter in cow, c-o-w,

and cat, &c. Q. What is the use of the cow? A. The cow gives us milk

to put into the tea. Q. Is milk used for any other purpose besides

putting it into tea? A. Yes; it is used to put into puddings, and for

many other things. Q. Name some of the other things? A. It is used to

make butter and cheese. Q. What part of it is made into butter? A.

The cream which swims at the top of the milk. Q. How is it made into

butter? A. It is put into a thing called a churn, in the shape of a

barrel. Q. What is done next? A. The churn is turned round by means of

a handle, and the motion turns the cream into butter. Q. What is the

use of butter? A. To put on bread, and to put into pie-crust, and many

other nice things. Q. Of what colour is butter? A. It is generally

yellow. A. Are there any other things made of milk? A. Yes, many

things; but the principal one is cheese. Q. How is cheese made? A. The

milk is turned into curds and whey, which is done by putting a liquid

into it called rennet. Q. What part of the curd and whey is made into

cheese? A. The curd, which is put into a press; and when it has been

in the press a few days it becomes cheese. Q. Is the flesh of the cow

useful? A. Yes; it is eaten, and is called beef; and the flesh of the

young calf is called veal. Q. Is the skin of the cow or calf of any

use? A. Yes; the skin of the cow or calf of any use? A. Yes; the skin

of the cow is manufactured into leather for the soles of shoes. Q.

What is made with the calf skin? A. The top of the shoe, which is

called the upper-leather. Q. Are there any other parts of the cow that

are useful? A. Yes; the horns, which are made into combs, handles of

knives, forks, and other things. Q. What is made of the hoofs that

come off the cow's feet? A. Glue, to join boards together. Q. Who made

the cow? A. Almighty God.

D.

Q. What is this? A. Letter D, the first letter it dog, dove, draper,

&c. Q. What is the use of the dog, A. To guard the house and keep

thieves away. Q. How can a dog guard the house and keep thieves away?

A. By barking to wake the persons who live in the house. Q. Is the dog

of any other use? A. Yes; to draw under a truck. D. Does he do as his

master bids him? A. Yes; and knows his master from any other person.

Q. Is the dog a faithful animal? A. Yes, very faithful; he has been

known to die of grief for the loss of his master. Q. Can you mention

an instance of the dog's faithfulness? A. Yes; a dog waited at the

gates of the Fleet prison for hours every day for nearly two years,

because his master was confined in the prison. Q. Can you mention

another instance of the dog's faithfulness? A. Yes; a dog lay down on

his master's grave in a churchyard in London for many weeks. Q. How

did the dog get food? A. The people who lived near noticed him, and

brought him victuals. Q. Did the people do any thing besides giving

him victuals A. Yes; they made a house for him for fear he should die

with wet and cold. Q. How long did he stay there? A. Until the people

took him away, because he howled dreadfully when the organ played on

Sundays. Q. Is it right to beat a dog? A. No; it is very wrong to use

any animal ill, because we do not like to be beaten ourselves. Q. Did

Almighty God make the dog? A. Yes; and every thing else that has life.

E.

Q. What letter is this? A. E, the first letter in egg. Q. What is

the use of an egg? A. It is useful for many purposes; to put into

puddings, and to eat by itself. Q. Should country children keep an egg

if they find it in the hedge? A. No, it is thieving; they should find

out the owner and take it home. Q. Do children ever throw stones at

the fowls? A. Yes; but they are mischievous children, and perhaps do

not go to school. Q. What ought children to learn by going to school?

A. To be kind and good to every body, and every thing that has life.

F.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter F, the first letter in frying-pan,

father, &c. Q. Let me hear you spell frying-pan. A. F-r-y-i-n-g-p-a-n.

Q. What is the use of the frying-pan? A. To fry meat and pan-cakes.

Q. Spell me the names of the different kinds of meat. A. B-e-e-f,

p-o-r-k, m-u-t-t-o-n, l-a-m-b, h-a-m, &c. Q. Of what shape are

frying-pans? A. Some circular, and some are like an ellipsis.[A] Q.

Are there any other utensils into which meat is put that are circular?

A. Yes, please, sir, my mother has some circular plates; and, please,

sir, my mother has some elliptical dishes. Q. Any thing besides? A.

Yes, please, sir, my mother has a circular table; and, please, sir, my

mother has a rectangular one, and it is made of deal.

[Footnote A: It may possibly strike some of my readers as strange

that a geometrical question should be put in a conversation on the

alphabet, but it should be remembered that, according to the Infant

School system, \_language\_ is not taught exclusively, but in connection

with \_number\_ and \_form\_;--questions like the above, therefore are

calculated to excite their memories, and induce an application of

their geometrical knowledge.]

G.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter G, the first letter in goat, good,

girl, &c. Q. Spell goat. A. G-o-a-t. Q. What is the use of the goat'?

A. In some countries people drink the goat's milk; and the skin is

useful to make the upper-leather of shoes. Q. Are goats fond of going

into the valleys and low places? A. No; they are fond of going up

hills and high places. Q. If a goat is coming down a hill which has

only one narrow path merely wide enough for one goat to walk on

without falling down, and another goat is coming up the same path,

what do they do? A. The goat that is coming up lies down and lets the

other goat walk over him. Q. Why does not one of the goats turn round

and go back again? A. Because there would not be room, and the one

which should try to turn round would fall down and be killed.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter H, the first letter in horse, house,

&c. Q. What is the use of the horse? A. To draw carts, coaches,

stages, waggons, fire-engines, &c. Q. Spell horse, and cart, and

coach. A. H-o-r-s-e, c-a-r-t, c-o-a-c-h. Q. What is the difference

between a cart and coach? A. A cart has two wheels, and a coach has

four. Q. Tell me some other difference. A. The horses in a cart go

before each other, but the horses in a coach go side by side. Q. What

is the use of a fire-engine? A. To put the fire out when the house is

on fire. Q. Is it right for children to play with the fire? A. No,

very wrong; as many children are burnt to death, and many houses burnt

down from it. Q. Should the horse be cruelly used? A. No; he should

be kindly treated, as he is the most useful animal we have. Q. Who

created him? A. Almighty God.

I.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter I, the first letter in iron,

idleness, &c. Q. Spell iron. A. I-r-o-n. Q. What is the use of an

iron? A. To iron the clothes after they are washed, and to make them

smooth. Q. How do they iron the clothes? A. Make the iron hot, and

then work it backwards and forwards on the clothes. Q. Should little

children come with clean clothes to school? A. Yes; and clean hands

and faces too. Q. Is not iron used for other purposes? A. Oh, yes; for

a great many things, as knives, forks, &c.

J.

Q. What is this letter? A. J, the first letter in jug, John, &c. Q.

What is the use of the jug? A. To hold water, or beer, or any other

liquid. Q. What is a jug made of? A. Of clay, which is worked round

into the shape of a jug, and then burnt, and that hardens it. Q.

Should children be careful when they are carrying a jug? A. Yes; or

else they will let it fall and break it. Q. Then it is necessary for

children to be careful? A. Yes, every body should be careful.

K.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter K, the first letter in kite, &c. Q.

What is the use of the kite? A. For little children to fly. Please,

sir, my big brother has got a kite. Q. What does your brother do with

his kite? A. Please, sir, he goes into the fields when he has got

time, and flies it. Q. How does he fly it? A. Please, sir, he has got

a long string, which he fixes to another called a loop, and then he

unwinds the string, and gets some boy to hold it up. Q. What then? A.

Please, sir, then he runs against the wind, and the kite goes up. Q.

What is the use of the tail of the kite? A. Please, sir, it will not

fly without a tail. Q. Why not? A. Please, sir, it goes round and

round without a tail, and comes down. Q. Then what do you suppose is

the use of the tail? Please, sir, I don't know. Another child will

probably supply the answer. Please, sir, to balance it.

L.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter L, the first letter in lion, &c. Q.

Spell lion. A. L-i-o-n. Q. What is the size of a full grown lion? A.

A full grown lion stands four feet and a half high, and is eight feet

long. Q. How high do you stand? A. Please, sir, some of us stand two

feet, and none of us above three. Q. Has the lion any particular

character among beasts? A. Yes, he is called the king of beasts on

account of his great strength. Q. When he seizes his prey, how far can

he leap? A. To the distance of twenty feet. Q. Describe some other

particulars concerning the lion. A. The lion has a shaggy mane, which

the lioness has not. Q. What other particulars? A. The lion's roar is

so loud that other animals run away when they hear it. Q. Where are

lions found? A. In most hot countries: the largest are found in Asia

and Africa.

M.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter M, the first letter in Monday,

mouse, &c. Q. What is the use of the mouse? A. To make the servants

diligent and put the things out of the way. Q. How can mice make

servants diligent? A. If people do not put their candles in a proper

place the mice will gnaw them. Q. Are mice of any other service? A.

Please, sir, if the mice did not make a smell, some people would never

clean their cupboards out.[A]

[Footnote A: This answer was given by a child four years old; and

immediately afterwards another child called out, "Please, sir, if it

were not for bugs, some people would not clean their bedsteads."]

N.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter N, the first letter in nut, &c. Q.

What is a nut? A. A thing that is hard, and it grows on a tree. Q.

What shape is it? A. Something in the shape of a marble. Q. How can

it be eaten, if it is like a marble? A. Please, air, it is the kernel

that we eat. Q. flow are nuts produced? A. They grow on trees.

O.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter O, the first letter in orange. Q.

Of what colour is an orange? A. An orange is green at first, but

afterwards becomes of a colour called orange-red. Q. Do they grow in

the ground like potatoes? A. No, they grow on trees like apples. Q.

Can you tell me anything in the shape of an orange? A. Yes, the earth

on which we live is nearly of that shape. Q. On what part of the earth

do we live? A. The surface. Q. What do you mean by the surface? A.

The outside. Q. Who formed the earth, and preserves it in its proper

motions? A. Almighty God.

P.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter P, the first letter in pig,

plum-pudding, &c. Q. What is the use of the pig? A. Its flesh is

eaten, and is called pork. Q. What is the use of the hair or bristles?

A. To make brushes or brooms. Q. What is the use of a brush? A. Some

brushes are to brush the clothes, and others to brush the dirt out of

the corners of the room. Q. Does a good servant ever leave the dirt

in the corners? A. No, never; a good servant or any clean little girl

would be ashamed of it.

Q.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter Q, the first letter in quill, &c. Q.

How are quills produced? A. From the wings of geese and other large

birds. Q. What is the use of the quill? A. To form into pens and many

other things. Q. What is the use of the pen? A. To dip into ink and

write with it. Q. What do you write upon? A. Paper. Q. What is paper

made of? A. Rags.

R.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter R, the first letter in rabbit, &c.

Q. What is the use of the rabbit? A. The flesh of the rabbit is

eaten, and is very nice. Q. What does the rabbit eat? A. Corn, grass,

cabbage-leaves, and many different herbs. Q. What is the use of the

skin? A. To make hats, and to trim boys' caps. Q. Are they very

numerous? A. They are to be found in almost all countries.

S.

Q. What is this? A. Letter S, the first letter in shoe, &c. Q. What is

the use of shoes? A. To keep the feet warm and dry. Q. Should children

walk in the mud or in the kennel? A. No, because that would spoil the

shoes, and wear them out too soon. Q. And why should little children

be careful not to wear them out any more than they can help? A.

Because our parents must work harder to buy us more.

T.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter T, the first letter in tea-kettle.

Q. What are tea-kettles made of? A. Some are made of tin, and some of

copper, and some of iron. Q. Why are they not made of wood? A. Because

the wood would burn. Q. What thing is that at the top? A. The handle.

Q. What is underneath the handle? A. The lid. Q. What is in the front

of it? A. The spout. Q. What is the use of the spout? A. For the water

to come out. Q. What is the use of the handle? A. To take hold of. Q.

Why do they not take hold of the spout? A. Because it is the wrong

way.

U.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter U, the first letter in umbrella, &c.

Q. Is letter U a vowel or consonant? A. A vowel. Q. What is the use of

the umbrella? A. To keep the rain off any body. Q. What are umbrellas

made of? A. Some of silk and some of cotton. Q. Which are the best?

A. Those that are made of silk. Q. Is there any thing else in an

umbrella? A. Yes; whalebone. Q. Where does whalebone come from? A. Out

of a large fish called a whale. Q. Who made the whale? A. Almighty

God.

V.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter V, the first letter in vine, &c. Q.

What is a vine? A. A thing that grows against the wall and produces

grapes. Q. Why does it not grow like another tree, and support its own

weight? A. Because it is not strong enough. Q. Then it cannot grow and

become fruitful in this country without man's assistance? A. No; and,

please, sir, we cannot grow and become fruitful without the assistance

of Almighty God.[A]

[Footnote A: This answer was given by a child five-years of age.]

W.

Q. What letter is this? A. It is Letter W, the first letter in wheel.

Q. Spell wheel. A. W-h-e-e-l. Q. What is the use of wheels? A. To make

it easier for horses to draw. Q. How do you know that? A. Please,

sir, I had a little cart full of stones, and the wheel came off; and,

please, sir, I found it much harder to draw. Q. Then if it was not

for wheels, the horses could not draw so great a weight? A. No, and,

please, sir, people could not go into the country so quick as they

do. Q. What trade do they call the persons that make wheels? A.

Wheel-wrights.

X.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter X, the first letter in Xenophon, a

man's name. Q. What was the particular character of Xenophon? A. He

was very courageous. Q. What does courageous mean? A. To be afraid to

do harm, but not to be afraid to do good, or anything that is right.

Q. What is the greatest courage? A. To conquer our own bad passions

and bad inclinations. Q. Is he a courageous man that can conquer his

bad passions? A. Yes; because they are the most difficult to conquer.

Y.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter Y, the first letter in yoke, &c. Q.

Is it a vowel or consonant? A. When it begins a word it is called a

consonant, but if not, a vowel. Q. What is a yoke? A. Please, sir,

what the milk people carry the milk pails on. Q. What is the use of

the yoke? A. To enable the people to carry the milk easier.

Z.

Q. What letter is this? A. Letter Z, the first letter in Zealander. Q.

What is a Zealander? A. A man that lives on an island in the Southern

Ocean, called Zealand. Q. How do they live? A. Principally by hunting

and fishing. Q. What is hunting? A. Following animals to catch them.

Q. Who made all the animals? A. Almighty God.

\* \* \* \* \*

The method above described is adapted to the large room, where the

children may be taught all together; but it is necessary to change the

scene even in this; for however novel and pleasing a thing may be

at first, if it be not managed with prudence it will soon lose

its effect. It is here to be observed, that the mode of teaching

described, is not practised every day, but only twice or thrice a

week. The children will take care that the teacher does not altogether

forget to teach them in any way that they have been accustomed to.

After letting the above plan lie by for a day or two, some of the

children will come to the teacher, and say, "Please, sir, may we

say the picture alphabet up in the gallery?" If the other children

overhear the question, it will go through the school like lightning:

"Oh yes--yes--yes, sir, if you please, do let us say the letters in

the gallery." Thus a desire is created in the children's minds, and it

is then especially that they may be taught with good effect.

\_Another plan\_ which we adopt, is in practice almost every day; but

it is better adapted to what is called the class-room: we have

the alphabet printed in large letters, both in Roman and Italic

characters, on one sheet of paper: this paper is pasted on a board, or

on pasteboard, and placed against the wall; the whole class then stand

around it, but instead of one of the monitors pointing to the letters,

the master or mistress does it; so that the children not only obtain

instruction from each other, but every child has a lesson from the

master or mistress twice every day.

Before they go to the reading lessons, they have the sounds of all the

words in spelling: thus the sound of a--ball, call, fall, wall; then

the reading-lesson is full of words of the same sound. In like manner

they proceed with other letters, as i--the sound of which they learn

from such words as five, drive, strive, until, by a series of lessons,

they become acquainted with all the sounds; and are able to read any

common book.

I have observed in some instances the most deplorable laxity in this

particular. Cases have occurred in which children have been for two

years at school, and yet scarcely knew the whole alphabet; and I have

known others to be four years in an infant school, without being able

to read. I hesitate not to say that the fault rests exclusively

with the teachers, who, finding this department of their work more

troublesome than others which are attractive to visitors, have

sometimes neglected it, and even thrown it entirely aside, affirming

that reading is not a part of the infant system at all! Such a

declaration is, however, only to be accounted for from the most

lamentable ignorance, preverseness, or both. Had it been true, we

should not have had a single infant school in Scotland, and throughout

that country the children read delightfully.

The great importance of full instruction in reading will be apparent

from the following considerations.

1. If the parents do not find the children learn to read, they will

discontinue sending them. This they consider essential, and nothing

else will be deemed by them an adequate substitute.

2. Children cannot make desirable progress in other schools which

they may enter, unless they obtain an ability to read at least simple

lessons.

3. Neglect in this respect impedes the progress of the infant system.

Such an obstacle ought not to exist, and should at once be removed.

4. In manufacturing districts children go to work very soon; and if

they are not able to read before, there is reason to fear they will

not afterwards acquire the power; but if they have this, Sunday

schools may supply other deficiencies.

5. Want of ability to read prevents, of course, a knowledge of the

Word of God.

To prevent this evil, I have arranged a series, denominated

"Developing Lessons," the great object of which is to induce children

to think and reflect on what they see. They are thus formed: at the

top is a coloured picture, or series of coloured pictures of insects,

quadrupeds, and general objects. For instance, there is one containing

the poplar, hawk-moth, and wasp. The lesson is as follows: "The wasp

can sting, and fly as well as the moth, which does not sting. I hope

no wasp will sting me; he is small, but the hawk-moth is large. The

moth eats leaves, but the wasp loves sweet things, and makes a round

nest. If boys take the nest they may be stung: the fish like the

wasp-grubs." On this, questions are proposed: Which stings? Which is

small and which large? Which eats leaves? Which makes a round nest?

&c. &c.

To take another instance. There is a figure of an Italian, to which is

appended the following: "The Italian has got a flask of oil and a fish

in his hand, and something else in his hand which the little child

who reads this must find out. Any child can tell who makes use of the

sense of seeing. In Italy they make a good deal of wine; big grapes

grow there that they make it with. Italians can sing very well, and

so can little children when they are taught." Questions are likewise

proposed on this, as before.

Of these lessons, however, there is a great variety. All schools

should possess them: they will effectually prevent the evil alluded

to, by checking the apathy of children in learning to read, and

calling the teacher's powers into full exercise. They are equally

adapted to spelling and reading.

I will give several specimens of reading lessons in natural history,

each of which has a large, well-engraved and coloured plate at the

top, copied from nature.

THE EAGLE.

How glad some poor children would be if they could read about the

eagle. He is a big strong bird, and has such great wings, and such

long sharp claws, that he can dig them into the lamb, hare, rabbit,

and other animals, and thus fly away with them to feed his young ones,

and to eat them himself. Eagles make such a large nest on the side of

some high rock, where nobody can get at it. There used to be eagles in

Wales, and there are some now in Scotland, but very few in England,

for they do not like to be where there are many people. \_The Almighty

gave man dominion over the birds of the air\_, as well as over the

other animals, and as he gave man power to \_think\_, if the eagles

become troublesome, men catch them, though they can fly so high; and

as the eagle knows this, he likes to keep out of our way, and go into

parts of the world where there are not so many people. There are many

sorts of eagles: the black eagle, the sea eagle, the bald eagle, and

others. They have all strong bills bent down in front, and strong

claws. This bird is mentioned in the Bible.

Questions are proposed after this is read, and thus the examination

proceeds:--Q. What is that? A. An eagle. Q. What sort of a bird is he?

A. He is big and strong. Q. What are those? A. His feathers. Q. What

else are they called? A. His plumage. Q. Is the eagle a small bird?

A. No, very large. Q. Are his claws long and sharp? A. Yes. Q. What

animals could he carry away? A. A lamb, a hare, a rabbit, or other

small animals. Q. What does he do with those? A. Feed his young ones.

Q. Where does the eagle make his nest? A. On the side of some rock. Q.

Why does he make it there? A. That no one may get at it. Q. Used there

to be eagles in Wales? A. Yes. Q. Where are there a few still? A. In

England, Scotland, and Ireland. Q. Why are they not as plentiful as

they were? A. Because they do not like to be where many men live. Q.

Did the Almighty give man dominion over the birds of the air? A. Yes.

Q. What other power did he give man? A. Power to think. Q. As men can

think, when the eagles became troublesome, what did they do? A. They

caught them. Q. And what did the eagles that were not caught do? A.

They went to places where men were not so plenty. Q. Are, there many

different kinds of eagles? A. Yes. Q. Name some. A. The black eagle,

the bald eagle, the sea eagle, and others.

THE VULTURE.

The vulture is like the eagle in size, and some of its habits; but it

is so very different from it in many ways, that there is little danger

of confusing the two together: the greatest distinction between them

is, that the head of the vulture is either quite naked, or covered

only with a short down, while the eagle's is well feathered. This is

the chief difference in appearance, but in their habits there is a

much greater. Instead of flying over hills and valleys in pursuit of

living game, the vultures only search for dead carcasses, which they

prefer, although they may have been a long time dead, and therefore

very bad, and smelling very offensively. They generally live in very

warm countries, and are useful in clearing away those dead carcasses

which, but for them, would cause many dreadful diseases. In some

countries, indeed, on account of this, the inhabitants will not

allow any one to injure them, and they are called for this reason

scavengers, which means that they do the business for which scavengers

are employed. Vultures are very greedy and ravenous; they will often

eat so much that they are not able to move or fly, but sit quite

stupidly and insensible. One of them will often, at a single meal,

devour the entire body of an albatross (bones and all), which is a

bird nearly as large as the vulture itself. They will smell a dead

carcass at a very great distance, and will soon surround and devour

it.

Vultures lay two eggs at a time and only once a year: they build their

nests on the same kind of places as eagles do, so that it is very hard

to find them.

What does the vulture resemble the eagle in? A. In size and in some of

its habits. Q. In what does it differ from the eagle? A. In having a

neck and head either naked or covered with short down. Q. What is the

difference in the manner in which they feed? A. The eagle seeks its

food over hill and valley, and lives entirely on prey which he takes

alive, while the vulture seeks out dead and putrid carcasses. Q. For

what reason do you suppose is the vulture's neck not covered with

feathers as the eagle's is? A. If they had feathers on their necks,

like eagles and hawks, they would soon become clotted with blood. Q.

Why would this happen? A. Because they are continually plunging their

necks into decayed flesh and bloody carcasses. Q. How do vultures sit?

A. In a dull, mopeing manner. Q. Where do they generally sit? A. On

tall dead trees. Q. Do they continue thus long? A. Yes, for several

hours. Q. What is the cause of their thus sitting so dull and

inactive? A. The great quantity of food they have eaten. Q. Is there

any description of vulture forming an exception to the general

character of those birds? A. Yes, that particular kind called the

snake eater. Q. Where is this bird a native of? A. Of Africa. Q. Why

is it called the snake eater? A. On account of its singular manner

of destroying serpents, on which it feeds. Q. Describe the manner in

which this bird kills its prey. A. He waits until the serpent raises

its head, and then strikes him with his wing, and repeats the blow

until the serpent is killed. Q. What do the natives of Asia and Africa

call the vulture? A. The scavenger. Q. Why? A. Because they are so

useful in eating dead carcasses. Q. How is this useful? A. It clears

the ground of them; otherwise, in those warm places, they would be the

cause of much disease. Q. What does this shew us? A. That the good God

has created nothing without its use. Q. What is the largest bird of

the vulture kind? A. The great condor of South America. Q. What does

its wing often measure from tip to tip? A. Twelve feet when spread

out. Q. How do the natives of South America often catch the vulture?

A. The dead carcass of a cow or horse is set for a bait, on which they

feed so ravenously that they become stupid, and are easily taken.

THE CROCODILE.

I hope you will not put your dirty hands on this picture of the

crocodile. The live ones have hard scales on their backs, and such a

many teeth, that they could bite a man's leg off; but there are none

in our land, only young ones that sailors bring home with them. The

crocodile can run fast; those are best off who are out of his way. He

lives by the water; he goes much in it; and he can swim well. Young

ones come out of eggs, which the old ones lay in the sand. Some

beasts eat the eggs, or else there would be too many crocodiles. The

crocodile can run fast if he runs straight, and those who wish to get

out of his way run zigzag, and he takes some time to turn; the poor

black men know this, and can get out of his way; but some of them can

fight and kill him on the land or in the water. I think the crocodile

is mentioned in \_Scripture\_. Ask your teacher what Scripture means.

When you learn geography you will know where many of the places are

that are mentioned in the Bible, and you will see where the river Nile

is. There are such a many crocodiles on the banks of that river that

the people are afraid to go alone. What a many wonderful animals our

great Creator has made! How humble and thankful we should be to see so

many great wonders!

Q. What have crocodiles on their backs? A. Hard scales. Q. Have they

many teeth? A. Yes, a great many. Q. Could they bite off a man's leg?

A. They could. Q. Are there any in our country? A. None wild, but a

few that sailors bring in ships. Q. Can the crocodile run fast? A.

Yes. Q. Where does he live? A. In the water. Q. What do their young

ones come out of? A. Out of eggs, which the old one lays in the sand.

Q. How do people run that wish to get out of the crocodile's way? A.

Zigzag, like the waved line in our lesson. Q. What do some men do? A.

Fight and kill them in the water. Q. Where do most of those animals

live? A. In the river Nile. Q. Where is this river? A. In Egypt.

The spelling lessons contain words capable of explanation, such as

white, black, round, square; others are classed as fleet, ship, brig,

sloop, &c.; and others are in contrast, as hot, cold, dark, light,

wet, dry, &c.

In this department we use the tablet placed beneath the arithmeticon,

the invention and improvement of which are described in the volume

entitled "Early Discipline Illustrated, or the Infant System

Successful and Progressing." A clear idea of the whole apparatus is

given by the wood-cut on the next page, and it ought certainly to be

found in every infant school. The sense of sight is then brought into

full action to aid the mind, and that with results which would not

easily be conceived. We shall take another opportunity of explaining

the use of the upper part of the apparatus, the lower demanding our

present attention.

[Illustration]

To use the \_tablet\_, let the followings things be observed. It is

supposed the children know well there are twenty-six letters in the

alphabet; that twenty are called consonants, and that six are vowels.

We take first one perpendicular row of letters in the figure. Now

point to D, and say, What is that'? and the answer will be, D. Ask, Is

it a vowel or consonant, and they will reply, A consonant; but ask,

Why do you know it is D, and the answer will probably be, It is so

because it is. Hide the circular part of the letter, and ask, What is

the position of the other part, and they will say, having previously

learnt the elements of form which will shortly be explained, A

perpendicular line; hide that, and ask them what the other part is,

telling them to bend one of their fore-fingers in the same form, and

they will say, A curved line. If they are then asked how they may know

it is D, they will say, Because it is made of a perpendicular line and

has a curved line behind. Further information may then be given. Turn

the D letter up thus [Illustration: The character D turned on its

side], and say, I want to teach you the difference between concave and

convex: the under part of the curve is concave and the upper part of

it is convex. Then say, I shall now take the letter away, and wish you

to shew me concave and convex on one of your fingers; when they will

bend the forefinger and point them both out on it. Go on with the

other letters in the same way: shew them the vowels after the

consonants and analyze each one. For example, A is formed of two

inclined lines and a horizontal line to join them in the centre; and

the top of that letter is an acute angle, and were a line placed at

the bottom it would be a triangle. A brass letter may be moreover

shewn to be a substance: its properties may be described as hard,

smooth, bright, &c., and its coming from the mineral kingdom may be

noticed, and thus the instruction may be indefinitely varied.

The \_power\_ of letters may then be pointed out. Ask them to spell M R,

and they will give you the sound of R, or something like it, and so

in reference to other letters. But place the A against the M as it

appears in the figure, and you may teach them to say A, M, AM; and

thus all the way down the left side of the row of consonants. If then

you carry the vowel down on the other side of them, you will change

the lesson, and by such means go on almost \_ad infinitum\_. Double rows

of consonants may be placed with a vowel between them, and when well

practiced in this, they will ask for the vowel to be omitted that

they may supply it, which they will do very readily and with great

pleasure, while there is a tasking of the mind which cannot but prove

beneficial.

Again, turn the frame with the balls round, so that the wires are

perpendicular instead of horizontal, raise a ball gently, and say, To

ascend, ascending, ascended; let it fall gently, saying, to descend,

descending, descended; with a little explanation these words will then

be understood, and others may be taught in the same way. To fall,

falling, fallen; to rise, rising, risen; to go, going, gone, will

readily occur, and others will easily be supplied by the ingenuity of

the instructor. The frame may also be applied to \_grammar\_.

It is to be used as follows:--Move one of the balls to a part of the

frame distinct from the rest. The children will then repeat, "There

\_it\_ is, there \_it\_ is." Apply your finger to the ball, and set it

running round. The children will immediately change from saying,

"There \_it\_ is," to "There \_it\_ goes, there \_it\_ goes."

When they have repeated "There it goes" long enough to impress it on

their memory, stop the ball; the children will probably say, "Now \_it\_

stops, now \_it\_ stops." When that is the case, move another ball to

it, and then explain to the children the difference between singular

and plural, desiring them to call out, "There \_they\_ are, there \_they\_

are;" and when they have done that as long as may be proper, set both

balls moving, and it is likely they will call out, "There \_they\_ go,

there \_they\_ go." I do not particularize further, because I know that

good teachers will at once see the principle aimed at, and supply the

other requisite lessons: the object of this book being rather to shew

the principle of the thing, than to go into detail.

CHAPTER XII.

ARITHMETIC.

\_The arithmeticon--How applied--Numeration--Addition--Subtraction--

Multiplication--Division--Fraction--Arithmetical tables--Arithmetical

Songs--Observations\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"In arithmetic, as in every other branch of education, the principal

object should be to preserve the understanding from implicit belief,

to invigorate its powers, and to induce the laudable ambition of

progressive improvement."--\_Edgeworth\_

\* \* \* \* \*

The advantage of a knowledge of arithmetic has never been disputed.

Its universal application to the business of life renders it an

important acquisition to all ranks and conditions of men. The

practicability of imparting the rudiments of arithmetic to very young

children has been satisfactorily shewn by the Infant-school System;

and it has been found, likewise, that it is the readiest and surest

way of developing the thinking faculties of the infant mind. Since the

most complicated and difficult questions of arithmetic, as well as

the most simple, are all solvable by the same rules, and on the same

principles, it is of the utmost importance to give children a clear

insight into the primary principles of number. For this purpose we

take care to shew them, by visible objects, that all numbers are

combinations of unity; and that all changes of number must arise

either from adding to or taking from a certain stated number. After

this, or rather, perhaps I should say, in conjunction with this

instruction, we exhibit to the children the \_signs\_ of number, and

make them acquainted with their various combinations; and lastly, we

bring them to the abstract consideration of number; or what may be

termed \_mental arithmetic\_. If you reverse this, which has generally

been the system of instruction pursued--if you set a child to learn

its multiplication, pence, and other tables, before you have shewn it

by \_realities\_, the combinations of unity which these tables express

in words--you are rendering the whole abstruse, difficult, and

uninteresting; and, in short, are giving it knowledge which it is

unable to apply.

As far as regards the general principles of numerical tuition, it may

be sufficient to state, that we should begin with unity, and proceed

very gradually, by slow and sure steps, through the simplest forms of

combinations to the more comprehensive. Trace and retrace your first

steps--the children can never be too thoroughly familiar with the

first principles or facts of number.

We have various ways of teaching arithmetic, in use in the schools;

I shall speak of them all, beginning with a description of the

arithmeticon, which is of great utility.

[Illustration]

I have thought it necessary in this edition to give the original

woodcut of the arithmeticon, which it will be seen contains twelve

wires, with one ball on the first wire, two on the second, and so

progressing up to twelve. The improvement is, that each wire should

contain twelve balls, so that the whole of the multiplication table

may be done by it, up to 12 times 12 are 144. The next step was having

the balls painted black and white alternately, to assist the sense of

seeing, it being certain that an uneducated eye cannot distinguish

the combinations of colour, any more than an uneducated ear can

distinguish the combinations of sounds. So far the thing succeeded

with respect to the sense of seeing; but there was yet another thing

to be legislated for, and that was to prevent the children's attention

being drawn off from the objects to which it was to be directed, viz.

the smaller number of balls as separated from the greater. This object

could only be attained by inventing a board to slide in and hide the

greater number from their view, and so far we succeeded in gaining

their undivided attention to the balls we thought necessary to move

out. Time and experience only could shew that there was another thing

wanting, and that was a tablet, as represented in the second woodcut,

which had a tendency to teach the children the difference between real

numbers and representative characters, therefore the necessity of

brass figures, as represented on the tablet; hence the children would

call figure seven No. 1, it being but one object, and each figure they

would only count as one, thus making 937, which are the representative

characters, only three, which is the real fact, there being only three

objects. It was therefore found necessary to teach the children

that the figure seven would represent 7 ones, 7 tens, 7 hundreds, 7

thousands, or 7 millions, according to where it might be placed in

connection with the other figures; and as this has already been

described, I feel it unnecessary to enlarge upon the subject.

[Illustration]

THE ARITHMETICON.

It will be seen that on the twelve parallel wires there are 144 balls,

alternately black and white. By these the elements of arithmetic may

be taught as follows:--

\_Numeration\_.--Take one ball from the lowest wire, and say units,

\_one\_, two from the next, and say tens, \_two\_; three from the third,

and say hundreds, \_three\_; four from the fourth, and say thousands,

\_four\_; five from the fifth, and say tens of thousands, \_five\_; six

from the sixth, and say hundreds of thousands, \_six\_; seven from the

seventh, and say millions, \_seven\_; eight from the eighth, and say

tens of millions, \_eight\_; nine from the ninth, and say hundreds of

millions, \_nine\_; ten from the tenth, and say thousands of millions,

\_ten\_; eleven from the eleventh, and say tens of thousands of

millions, \_eleven\_; twelve from the twelfth, and say hundreds of

thousands of millions, \_twelve\_.

The tablet beneath the balls has six spaces for the insertion of brass

letters and figures, a box of which accompanies the frame. Suppose

then the only figure inserted is the 7 in the second space from the

top: now were the children asked what it was, they would all say,

without instruction, "It is one." If, however, you tell them that an

object of such a form stands instead of seven ones, and place seven

balls together on a wire, they will at once see the use and power of

the number. Place a 3 next the seven, merely ask what it is, and they

will reply, "We don't know;" but if you put out three balls on a wire,

they will say instantly, "O it is three ones, or three;" and that they

may have the proper name they may be told that they have before

them \_figure 7\_ and \_figure 3\_. Put a 9 to these figures, and their

attention will be arrested: say, Do you think you can tell me what

this is? and, while you are speaking, move the balls gently out, and,

as soon as they see them, they will immediately cry out "Nine;" and in

this way they may acquire a knowledge of all the figures separately.

Then you may proceed thus: Units 7, tens 3; place three balls on the

top wire and seven on the second, and say, Thirty-seven, as you point

to the figures, and thirty-seven as you point to the balls. Then go

on, units 7, tens, 3, hundreds 9, place nine balls on the top wire,

three on the second, and seven on the third, and say, pointing to

each, Nine hundred and thirty-seven. And so onwards.

To assist the understanding and exercise the judgment, slide a figure

in the frame, and say, Figure 8. Q. What is this? A. No. 8. Q. If No.

1 be put on the left side of the 8, what will it be? A. 81. Q. If the

1 be put on the right side, then what will it be? A. 18. Q. If the

figure 4 be put before the 1, then what will the number be? A. 418. Q.

Shift the figure 4, and put it on the left side of the 8, then ask the

children to tell the number, the answer is 184. The teacher can keep

adding and shifting as he pleases, according to the capacity of his

pupils, taking care to explain as he goes on, and to satisfy himself

that his little flock perfectly understand him. Suppose figures

5476953821 are in the frame; then let the children begin at the left

hand, saying, units, tens, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands,

hundreds of thousands, millions, tens of millions, hundreds of

millions, thousands of millions. After which, begin at the right side,

and they will say, Five thousand four hundred and seventy-six million,

nine hundred and fifty-three thousand, eight hundred and twenty-one.

If the children are practised in this way, they will soon learn

numeration.

The frame was employed for this purpose long before its application to

others was perceived; but at length I found we might proceed to

\_Addition\_.--We proceed as follows:--1 and 2 are 3, and 3 are 6, and 4

are 10, and 5 are 15, and 6 are 21, and 7 are 28, and 8 are 36, and 9

are 45, and 10 are 55, and 11 are 66, and 12 are 78.

Then the master may exercise them backwards, saying, 12 and 11 are 23,

and 10 are 33, and 9 are 42, and 8 are 50, and 7 are 57, and 6 are 63,

and 5 are 68, and 4 are 72, and 3 are 75, and 2 are 77, and 1 is 78,

and so on in great variety.

Again: place seven balls on one wire, and two on the next, and ask

them how many 7 and 2 are; to this they will soon answer, Nine: then

put the brass figure 9 on the tablet beneath, and they will see how

the amount is marked: then take eight balls and three, when they will

see that eight and three are eleven. Explain to them that they cannot

put underneath two figure ones which mean 11, but they must put 1

under the 8, and carry 1 to the 4, when you must place one ball under

the four, and, asking them what that makes, they will say, Five.

Proceed by saying, How much are five and nine? put out the proper

number of balls, and they will say, Five and nine are fourteen. Put

a four underneath, and tell them, as there is no figure to put the 1

under, it must be placed next to it: hence they see that 937 added to

482, make a total of 1419.

\_Subtraction\_ may be taught in as many ways by this instrument. Thus:

take 1 from 1, nothing remains; moving the first ball at the same time

to the other end of the frame. Then remove one from the second wire,

and say, take one from 2, the children will instantly perceive that

only 1 remains; then 1 from 3, and 2 remain; 1 from 4, 3 remain; 1

from 5, 4 remain; 1 from 6, 5 remain; 1 from 7, 6 remain; 1 from 8, 7

remain; 1 from 9, 8 remain; 1 from 10, 9 remain; 1 from 11, 10 remain;

1 from 12, 11 remain.

Then the balls may be worked backwards, beginning at the wire

containing 12 balls, saying, take 2 from 12, 10 remain; 2 from 11, 9

remain; 2 from 10, 8 remain; 2 from 9, 7 remain; 2 from 8, 6 remain; 2

from 7, 5 remain; 2 from 6, 4 remain; 2 from 5, 3 remain; 2 from 4, 2

remain; 2 from 3, 1 remains.

The brass figure should be used for the remainder in each case. Say,

then, can you take 8 from 3 as you point to the figures, and they will

say "Yes;" but skew them 3 balls on a wire and ask them to deduct 8

from them, when they will perceive their error. Explain that in such a

case they must \_borrow\_ one; then say take 8 from 13, placing 12 balls

on the top wire, borrow one from the second, and take away eight and

they will see the remainder is five; and so on through the sum, and

others of the same kind.

In \_Multiplication\_, the lessons are performed as follows. The teacher

moves the first ball, and immediately after the two balls on the

second wire, placing them underneath the first, saying at the same

time, twice one are two, which the children will readily perceive. We

next remove the two balls on the second wire for a multiplier, and

then remove two balls from the third wire, placing them exactly under

the first two, which forms a square, and then say twice two are four,

which every child will discern for himself, as he plainly perceives

there are no more. We then move three on the third wire, and place

three from the fourth wire underneath them saying, twice three are

six. Remove the four on the fourth wire, and four on the fifth, place

them as before and say, twice four are eight. Remove five from the

fifth wire, and five from the sixth wire underneath them, saying twice

five are ten. Remove six from the sixth wire, and six from the seventh

wire underneath them and say, twice six are twelve. Remove seven from

the seventh wire, and seven from the eighth wire underneath them,

saying, twice seven are fourteen. Remove eight from the eighth wire,

and eight from the ninth, saying, twice eight are sixteen. Remove nine

on the ninth wire, and nine on the tenth wire, saying twice nine

are eighteen. Remove ten on the tenth wire, and ten on the eleventh

underneath them, saying, twice ten are twenty. Remove eleven on the

eleventh wire, and eleven on the twelfth, saying, twice eleven are

twenty-two. Remove one from the tenth wire to add to the eleven on

the eleventh wire, afterwards the remaining ball on the twelfth wire,

saying, twice twelve are twenty-four.

Next proceed backwards, saying, 12 times 2 are 24, 11 times 2 are 22,

10 times 2 are 20, &c.

For \_Division\_, suppose you take from the 144 balls gathered together

at one end, one from each row, and place the 12 at the other end, thus

making a perpendicular row of ones: then make four perpendicular rows

of three each and the children will see there are 4 3's in 12. Divide

the 12 into six parcels, and they will see there are. 6 2's in 12.

Leave only two out, and they will see, at your direction, that 2 is

the sixth part of 12. Take away one of these and they will see one is

the twelfth part of 12, and that 12 1's are twelve.

To explain the state of the frame as it appears in the cut, we must

first suppose that the twenty-four balls which appear in four lots,

are gathered together at the \_figured side\_: when the children will

see there are three perpendicular 8's, and as easily that there are 8

horizontal 3's. If then the teacher wishes them to tell how many 6's

there are in twenty-four, he moves them out as they appear in the

cut, and they see there are four; and the same principle is acted on

throughout.

The only remaining branch of numerical knowledge, which consists in an

ability to comprehend the powers of numbers, without either visible

objects or signs--is imparted as follows:

\_Addition\_.

One of the children is placed before the gallery, and repeats aloud,

in a kind of chaunt, the whole of the school repeating after him; One

and one are two; two and one are three; three and one are four, &c. up

to twelve.

Two and two are four; four and two are six; six and two are eight, &c.

to twenty-four.

Three and three are six; six and three are nine; nine and three are

twelve, &c. to thirty-six.

\_Subtraction\_.

One from twelve leaves eleven; one from eleven leaves ten, &c.

Two from twenty-four leave twenty-two; two from twenty-two leave

twenty, &c.

\_Multiplication\_.

Twice one are two; twice two are four, &c. &c. Three times three are

nine, three times four are twelve, &c. &c.

Twelve times two are twenty-four; eleven times two are twenty-two, &c.

&c.

Twelve times three are thirty-six; eleven times three are

thirty-three, &c. &c. until the whole of the multiplication table is

gone through.

\_Division\_.

There are twelve twos in twenty-four.--There are

eleven twos in twenty-two, &c. &c.

There are twelve threes in thirty-six, &c.

There are twelve fours in forty-eight, &c. &c.

\_Fractions\_.

Two are the half (1/2) of four.

" " " third (1/3) of six.

" " " fourth (1/2) of eight.

" " " fifth (1/5) of ten.

" " " sixth (1/6) of twelve.

" " " seventh (1/7) of fourteen.

" " " twelfth (1/12) of twenty-four; two are the

eleventh (1/11) of twenty-two, &c. &c.

Three are the half (1/2) of six.

" " " third (1/3) of nine.

" " " fourth (1/4) of twelve.

Three are the twelfth (1/12) of thirty-six; three are

the eleventh (1/11) of thirty-three, &c. &c.

Four are the half (1/2) of eight, &c.

In twenty-three are four times five, and three-fifths

(3/5) of five; in thirty-five are four times eight, and three-eighths

(3/8) of eight.

In twenty-two are seven times three, and one-third

(1/3) of three.

In thirty-four are four times eight, and one-fourth

(1/4) of eight.

The tables subjoined are repeated by the same method, each section

being a distinct lesson. To give an idea to the reader, the boy in the

rostrum says ten shillings the half (1/2) of a pound; six shillings

and eightpence one-third (1/3) of a pound, &c.

Sixpence the half (1/2) of a shilling, &c. Always remembering, that

whatever the boy says in the rostrum, the other children must repeat

after him, but not till the monitor has ended his sentence; and before

the monitor delivers the second sentence, he waits till the children

have concluded the first, they waiting for him, and he for them; this

prevents confusion, and is the means of enabling persons to understand

perfectly what is going on in the school.

In a book lately published, which is a compilation by two London

masters, it is stated, in the preface, that they were at a loss

for proper lessons: had they used those in existence I cannot help

thinking they were enough for the capacity of children under six years

of age.

254 ARITHMETICAL TABLES.

Numeration, Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, Division, and Pence

Tables.

-------------------------------------------------------------------

| ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION TABLE |

| 1 & | 2 & | 3 & | 4 & | 5 & | 6 & |

| 1 are 2 | 1 are 3 | 1 are 4 | 1 are 5 | 1 are 6 | 1 are 7 |

| 2 -- 3 | 2 -- 4 | 2 -- 5 | 2 -- 6 | 2 -- 7 | 2 -- 8 |

| 3 -- 4 | 3 -- 5 | 3 -- 6 | 3 -- 7 | 3 -- 8 | 3 -- 9 |

| 4 -- 5 | 4 -- 6 | 4 -- 7 | 4 -- 8 | 4 -- 9 | 4 -- 10 |

| 5 -- 6 | 5 -- 7 | 5 -- 8 | 5 -- 9 | 5 -- 10 | 5 -- 11 |

| 6 -- 7 | 6 -- 8 | 6 -- 9 | 6 -- 10 | 6 -- 11 | 6 -- 12 |

| 7 -- 8 | 7 -- 9 | 7 -- l0 | 7 -- 11 | 7 -- 12 | 7 -- 13 |

| 8 -- 9 | 8 -- 10 | 8 -- 11 | 8 -- 12 | 8 -- 13 | 8 -- 14 |

| 9 -- 10 | 9 -- 11 | 9 -- 12 | 9 -- 13 | 9 -- 14 | 9 -- 15 |

| 10 -- 11 | 10 -- 12 | 10 -- 13 | 10 -- 14 | 10 -- 15 | 10 -- 16 |

| 11 -- l2 | 11 -- 13 | 11 -- 14 | 11 -- 15 | 11 -- 16 | 11 -- 17 |

| l2 -- 13 | 12 -- 14 | 12 -- 14 | 12 -- 16 | 12 -- 17 | l2 -- 18 |

-------------------------------------------------------------------

| 7 & | 8 & | 9 & | 10 & | 11 & | 12 & |

| 1 are 8 | 1 are 9 | 1 are 10 | 1 are 11 | 1 are 12 | 1 are 13 |

| 2 -- 9 | 2 -- 10 | 2 -- 11 | 2 -- 12 | 2 -- 13 | 2 -- 14 |

| 3 -- 10 | 3 -- 11 | 3 -- 12 | 3 -- 13 | 3 -- 14 | 3 -- 15 |

| 4 -- 11 | 4 -- 12 | 4 -- 13 | 4 -- 14 | 4 -- 15 | 4 -- 16 |

| 5 -- 12 | 5 -- 13 | 5 -- 14 | 5 -- 15 | 5 -- 16 | 5 -- 17 |

| 6 -- 13 | 6 -- 14 | 6 -- 15 | 6 -- 16 | 6 -- 17 | 6 -- 18 |

| 7 -- 14 | 7 -- 15 | 7 -- 16 | 7 -- 17 | 7 -- 18 | 7 -- 19 |

| 8 -- 15 | 8 -- 16 | 8 -- 17 | 8 -- 18 | 8 -- 19 | 8 -- 20 |

| 9 -- 16 | 9 -- 17 | 9 -- 18 | 9 -- 19 | 9 -- 20 | 9 -- 21 |

| 10 -- 17 | 10 -- 18 | 10 -- 19 | 10 -- 20 | 10 -- 21 | 10 -- 22 |

| 11 -- l8 | 11 -- 19 | 11 -- 20 | 11 -- 21 | 11 -- 22 | 11 -- 23 |

| 12 -- 19 | 12 -- 20 | 11 -- 21 | l2 -- 22 | 12 -- 23 | 12 -- 24 |

===================================================================

| MULTIPLICATION AND DIVISION TABLE. || NUMERATION TABLE. |

|------------------------------------||---------------------------|

|2--2 are 4|4--5 are 20| 6--12 are 72|| 1 Units. |

| 3 -- 6| 6 -- 24| 7-- 7 -- 49|| 21 Tens. |

| 4 -- 8| 7 -- 28| 8 -- 56|| 321 Hundreds |

| 5 -- 10| 8 -- 32| 9 -- 63|| 4,321 Thousands. |

| 6 -- 12| 9 -- 36| 10 -- 70|| 54,321 X of Thousands.|

| 7 -- 14| 10 -- 40| 11 -- 77|| 654,321 C of Thousands.|

| 8 -- 16| 11 -- 44| 12 -- 84|| 7,654,321 Millions. |

| 9 -- 18| 12 -- 48| 8-- 8 -- 64|| 87,654,321 X of Millions. |

| 10 -- 20|5--5 -- 25| 9 -- 72||987,654,321 C of Millions. |

| 11 -- 22| 6 -- 30| 10 -- 80||===========================|

| 12 -- 24| 7 -- 35| 11 -- 88|| |

|3--3 -- 9| 8 -- 40| 12 -- 96|| PENCE TABLE |

| 4 -- 12| 9 -- 45| 9-- 9 -- 81|| |

| 5 -- 15| 10 -- 50| 10 -- 90||---------------------------|

| 6 -- 18| 11 -- 55| 11 -- 99|| \_d\_. \_s. d.\_|\_d.\_ \_s. d.\_|

| 7 -- 21| 12 -- 60| 12 -- 108|| 20 is 1 8 | 90 is 7 6 |

| 8 -- 24|6--6 -- 36|10--10 -- 100|| 30 -- 2 6 |100 -- 8 4 |

| 9 -- 27| 7 -- 42| 11 -- 110|| 40 -- 3 4 |110 -- 9 2 |

| 10 -- 30| 8 -- 48| 12 -- 120|| 50 -- 4 2 |120 --10 0 |

| 11 -- 33| 9 -- 54|11--11 -- 121|| 60 -- 5 0 |130 --10 10 |

| 12 -- 36| 10 -- 60| 12 -- 132|| 70 -- 5 10 |140 --11 8 |

|4--4 -- 16| 11 -- 66|12--12 -- 144|| 80 -- 6 8 |144 --12 0 |

-------------------------------------------------------------------

\_Tables of Weights and Measures\_.

\_Shilling Tables\_

\_s. l. s\_.

20 are 1 0

30 ---- 1 10

40 ---- 2 0

50 ---- 2 10

60 ---- 3 0

70 ---- 3 10

80 ---- 4 0

90 ---- 4 10

100 are 5 0

110 --- 5 10

120 --- 6 0

130 --- 6 10

140 --- 7 0

150 --- 7 10

160 --- 8 0

170 --- 8 10

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Practice Tables\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

Of a Pound.

\_s. d\_.

10 0 are half

6 8 --- third

5 0 --- fourth

4 0 --- fifth

3 4 --- sixth

2 6 --- eighth

1 8 --- twelfth

1 0 --- twentieth

Of a shilling.

6\_d\_. are half

4 --- third

3 --- fourth

2 --- sixth

1 --- twelfth

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Time\_.

60 seconds 1 minute

60 minutes 1 hour

24 hours 1 day

7 days 1 week

4 weeks 1 lunar month

12 cal. mon. 1 year

13 lunar months, 1 day, 6 hours, or 365 days, 6 hours, 1 year.

Thirty days hath September,

April, June, and November;

All the rest have thirty-one,

Save February, which alone

Hath twenty-eigth, except Leap year,

And twenty-nine is then its share.

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Troy Weight\_.

24 grains 1 pennywt.

20 pennywhts. 1 ounce

12 ounces 1 pound

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Avoirdupoise Weight\_.

16 drams 1 ounce

16 ounces 1 pound

28 pounds 1 quarter

4 quarters 1 hund. wt.

20 hund. wt. 1 ton

\* \* \* \* \*

\_ Apothecaries Weight.\_

20 grains 1 scruple

3 scruples 1 dram

8 drams 1 ounce

12 ounces 1 pound

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Wool Weight\_.

7 pounds 1 clove

2 cloves 1 stone

2 stones 1 tod

6½ tods 1 wey

2 weys 1 sack

12 sacks 1 last

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Wine Measure\_.

2 pints 1 quart

4 quarts 1 gallon

10 gallons 1 ank. brandy

42 gallons 1 tierce

63 gallons 1 hogshead

84 gallons 1 puncheon

2 hogsheads 1 pipe

2 pipes 1 ton

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Ale and Beer Measure\_.

2 pints 1 quart

4 quarts 1 gallon

8 gallons 1 firkin of ale

9 gallons 1 firk. of beer

2 firkins 1 kilderkin

2 kilderkins 1 barrel

14 barrel 1 hogshead

2 barrels 1 puncheon

3 barrels 1 butt

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Coal Measure\_.

4 pecks 1 bushel

9 bushels 1 vat or strike

3 bushels 1 sack

12 sacks 1 chaldron

91 chaldron 1 score

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Dry Measure\_.

2 pints 1 quart

2 quarts 1 pottle

2 pottles 1 gallon

2 gallons 1 peck

4 pecks 1 bushel

2 bushels 1 strike

5 bushels 1 sack flour

8 bushels 1 quarter

5 quarters 1 wey or load

5 pecks 1 bushl. water measure

4 bushels 1 coom

10 cooms 1 wey

2 weys 1 last corn

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Solid or Cubic Measure\_.

1728 inches 1 foot

27 feet 1 yard or load

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Long Measure\_.

3 barleycorns 1 inch

12 inches 1 foot

3 feet 1 yard

6 feet 1 fathom

5½ yards 1 pole or rod

40 poles 1 furlong

8 furlongs 1 mile

3 miles 1 league

20 leagues 1 degree

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Cloth Measure\_.

24 inches 1 nail

4 nails 1 quarter

4 quarters 1 yard

5 quarters 1 English ell

3 quarters 1 Flemish ell

6 quarters 1 French ell

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Land or Square Measure\_.

144 inches 1 foot

9 feet 1 yard

30¾ yards 1 pole

40 poles 1 rood

4 roods 1 acre

640 acres 1 mile

This includes length and breadth.

\* \* \* \* \*

\_Hay\_.

36 pounds 1 truss of straw

56 pounds 1 do. of old hay

60 pounds 1 do. of new hey

36 trusses 1 load

MONEY.

Two farthings one halfpenny make,

A penny four of such will take;

And to allow I am most willing

That twelve pence always make a shilling;

And that five shillings make a crown,

Twenty a sovereign, the same as pound.

Some have no cash, some have to spare--

Some who have wealth for none will care.

Some through misfortune's hand brought low,

Their money gone, are filled with woe,

But I know better than to grieve;

If I have none I will not thieve;

I'll be content whate'er's my lot,

Nor for misfortunes care a \_groat\_.

There is a Providence whose care

And sovereign love I crave to share;

His love is \_gold without alloy\_;

Those who possess't have \_endless joy\_.

TIME OR CHRONOLOGY.

Sixty seconds make a minute;

Time enough to tie my shoe

Sixty minutes make an hour;

Shall it pass and nought to do?

Twenty-four hours will make a day

Too much time to spend in sleep,

Too much time to spend in play,

For seven days will end the week,

Fifty and two such weeks will put

Near an end to every year;

Days three hundred sixty-five

Are the whole that it can share.

Saving leap year, when one day

Added is to gain lost time;

May it not be spent in play,

Nor in any evil crime.

Time is short, we often say;

Let us, then, improve it well;

That eternally we may

Live where happy angels dwell.

AVOIRDUPOISE WEIGHT.

Sixteen drachms are just an ounce,

As you'll find at any shop;

Sixteen ounces make a pound,

Should you want a mutton chop.

Twenty-eight pounds are the fourth

Of an hundred weight call'd gross;

Four such quarters are the whole

Of an hundred weight at most.

Oh! how delightful,

Oh! how delightful,

Oh! how delightful,

\_To sing this rule\_.

Twenty hundreds make a ton;

By this rule all things are sold

That have any waste or dross

And are bought so, too, I'm told.

When we buy and when we sell,

May we always use just weight;

May we justice love so well

To do always what is right.

Oh! how delightful,

&c., &c., &c.

APOTHECARIES' WEIGHT.

Twenty grains make a scruple,--some scruple to take;

Though at times it is needful, just for our health's sake;

Three scruples one drachm, eight drachms make one ounce,

Twelve ounces one pound, for the pestle to pounce.

By this rule is all medicine mix'd, though I'm told

By Avoirdupoise weight 'tis bought and 'tis sold.

But the best of all physic, if I may advise,

Is temperate living and good exercise.

DRY MEASURE.

Two pints will make one quart

Of barley, oats, or rye;

Two quarts one pottle are, of wheat

Or any thing that's dry.

Two pottles do one gallon make,

Two gallons one peck fair,

Four pecks one bushel, heap or brim,

Eight bushels one quarter are.

If, when you sell, you give

Good measure shaken down,

Through motives good, you will receive

An everlasting crown.

ALE AND BEER MEASURE.

Two pints will make one quart,

Four quarts one gallon, strong:--

Some drink but little, some too much,--

To drink too much is wrong.

Eight gallons one firkin make,

Of liquor that's call'd ale

Nine gallons one firkin of beer,

Whether 'tis mild or stale.

With gallons fifty-four

A hogshead I can fill:

But hope I never shall drink much,

Drink much whoever will.

WINE, OIL, AND SPIRIT MEASURE.

Two pints will make one quart

Of any wine, I'm told:

Four quarts one gallon are of port

Or claret, new or old.

Forty-two gallons will

A tierce fill to the bung:

And sixty-three's a hogshead full

Of brandy, oil, or rum.

Eighty-four gallons make

One puncheon fill'd to brim,

Two hogsheads make one pipe or butt,

Two pipes will make one tun.

A little wine within

Oft cheers the mind that's sad;

But too much brandy, rum, or gin,

No doubt is very bad.

From all excess beware,

Which sorrow must attend;

Drunkards a life of woe must share,--

When time with them shall end.

The arithmeticon, I would just remark, may be applied to \_geometry\_.

Round, square, oblong, &c. &c., may be easily taught. It may also be

used in teaching \_geography\_. The shape of the earth may be shewn by

a ball, the surface by the outside, its revolution on its axis by

turning it round, and the idea of day and night may be given by a ball

and a candle in a dark-room.

As the construction and application of this instrument is the result

of personal, long-continued, and anxious effort, and as I have rarely

seen a pirated one made properly or understood, I may express a

hope that whenever it is wanted either for schools or nurseries,

application will be made for it to my depot.

I have only to add, that a board is placed at the back to keep the

children from seeing the balls, except as they are put out; and that

the brass figures at the side are intended to assist the master when

he is called away, so that he may see, on returning to the frame,

where he left off.

The slightest glance at the wood-cut will shew how unjust the

observations of the writer of "Schools for the Industrious Classes, or

the Present State of Education amongst the Working People of England,"

published under the superintendance of the Central Society of

Education, are, where he says, "We are willing to assume that Mr.

Wilderspin has originated some improvements in the system of Infant

School education; but Mr. Wilderspin claims so much that many persons

have been led to refuse him that degree of credit to which he is

fairly entitled. For example, he claims a beneficial interest in

an instrument called the Arithmeticon, of which he says he was the

inventor. This instrument was described in a work on arithmetic,

published by Mr. Friend forty years ago. The instrument is, however,

of much older date; it is the same in principle as the Abacus of the

Romans, and in its form resembles as nearly as possible the Swanpan

of the Chinese, of which there is a drawing in the Encyclopaedia

Brittanica. Mr. Wilderspin merely invented the name." Now, I defy

the writer of this to prove that the Arithmeticon existed before I

invented it. I claim no more than what is my due. The Abacus of the

Romans is entirely different; still more so is the Chinese Swanpan;

if any person will take the trouble to look into the Encyclopaedia

Britannica, they will see the difference at once, although I never

heard of either until they were mentioned in the pamphlet referred to.

There are 144 balls on mine, and it is properly simplified for infants

with the addition of the tablet, which explains the representative

characters as well as the real ones, which are the balls.

I have not yet heard what the Central Society have invented; probably

we shall soon hear of the mighty wonders performed by them, from one

end of the three kingdoms to the other. Their whole account of the

origin of the Infant System is as partial and unjust as it possibly

can be. Mr. Simpson, whom they quote, can tell them so, as can

also some of the committee of management, whose names I see at the

commencement of the work. The Central Society seem to wish to pull me

down, as also does the other society to whom reference is made is the

same page of which I complain; and I distinctly charge both societies

with doing me great injustice; the society complains of my plans

without knowing them, the other adopts them without acknowledgment,

and both have sprung up fungus-like, after the Infant System had been

in existence many years, and I had served three apprenticeships to

extend and promote it, without receiving subscriptions or any public

aid whatever. It is hard, after a man has expended the essence of his

constitution, and spent his children's property for the public good,

in inducing people to establish schools in the principal towns in

the three kingdoms,--struck at the root of domestic happiness, by

personally visiting each town, doing the thing instead of writing

about it--that societies of his own countrymen should be so anxious to

give the credit to foreigners. Verily it is most true that a Prophet

has no honour in his own country. The first public honour I ever

received was at Inverness, in the Highlands of Scotland, the last was

by the Jews in London, and I think there was a space of about twenty

years between each.

CHAPTER XIII.

FORM, POSITION, AND SIZE.

\_Method of instruction, geometrical song--Anecdotes--Size--Song

measure--Observations\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Geometry is eminently serviceable to improve and strengthen the

intellectual faculties."--\_Jones\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

Among the novel features of the Infant School System, that of

geometrical lessons is the most peculiar. How it happened that a mode

of instruction so evidently calculated for the infant mind was so long

overlooked, I cannot imagine; and it is still more surprising that,

having been once thought of, there should be any doubt as to its

utility. Certain it is that the various forms of bodies is one of the

first items of natural education, and we cannot err when treading in

the steps of Nature. It is undeniable that geometrical knowledge is of

great service in many of the mechanic arts, and, therefore, proper

to be taught children who are likely to be employed in some of those

arts; but, independently of this, we cannot adopt a better method of

exciting and strengthening their powers of observation. I have seen a

thousand instances, moreover, in the conduct of the children, which

have assured me, that it is a very pleasing as well as useful branch

of instruction. The children, being taught the first elements of form,

and the terms used to express the various figures of bodies, find in

its application to objects around them an inexhaustible source of

amusement. Streets, houses, rooms, fields, ponds, plates, dishes,

tables; in short, every thing they see calls for observation, and

affords an opportunity for the application of their geometrical

knowledge. Let it not, then, be said that it is beyond their capacity,

for it is the simplest and most comprehensible to them of all

knowledge;--let it not be said that it is useless, since its

application to the useful arts is great and indisputable; nor is it to

be asserted that it is unpleasing to them, since it has been shewn to

add greatly to their happiness.

It is essential in this, as in every other branch of education,

to begin with the first principles, and proceed \_slowly\_ to their

application, and the complicated forms arising therefrom. The next

thing is to promote that application of which we have before spoken,

to the various objects around them. It is this, and this alone, which

forms the distinction between a school lesson and practical knowledge;

and so far will the children be found from being averse from this

exertion, that it makes the acquirement of knowledge a pleasure

instead of a task. With these prefatory remarks I shall introduce

a description of the method I have pursued, and a few examples of

geometrical lessons.

We will suppose that the whole of the children are seated in the

gallery, and that the teacher (provided with a brass instrument formed

for the purpose, which is merely a series of joints like those to a

counting-house candlestick, from which I borrowed the idea,[A] and

which may be altered as required, in a moment,) points to a straight

line, asking, What is this? A. A straight line. Q. Why did you not

call it a crooked line? A. Because it is not crooked, but straight. Q.

What are these? A. Curved lines. Q. What do curved lines mean? A. When

they are bent or crooked. Q. What are these? A. Parallel straight

lines. Q. What does parallel mean? A. Parallel means when they are

equally distant from each other in every part. Q. If any of you

children were reading a book. that gave an account of some town which

had twelve streets, and it is said that the streets were parallel,

would you understand what it meant? A. Yes; it would mean that the

streets were all the same way, side by side, like the lines which we

now see. Q. What are those? A. Diverging or converging straight lines.

Q. What is the difference between diverging and converging lines and

parallel lines? A. Diverging or converging lines are not at an equal

distance from each other, in every part, but parallel lines are. Q.

What does diverge mean? A. Diverge means when they go from each other,

and they diverge at one end and converge at the other.[B] Q. What does

converge mean? A. Converge means when they come towards each other.

Q. Suppose the lines were longer, what would be the consequence? A.

Please, sir, if they were longer, they would meet together at the end

they converge. Q. What would they form by meeting together? A. By

meeting together they would form an angle. Q. What kind of an angle?

A. An acute angle? Q. Would they form an angle at the other end? A.

No; they would go further from each other. Q. What is this? A. A

perpendicular line. Q. What does perpendicular mean? A. A line up

straight, like the stem of some trees. Q. If you look, you will see

that one end of the line comes on the middle of another line; what

does it form? A. The one which we now see forms two right angles. Q.

I will make a straight line, and one end of it shall lean on another

straight line, but instead of being upright like the perpendicular

line, you see that it is sloping. What does it form? A. One side of

it is an acute angle, and the other side is an obtuse angle. Q. Which

side is the obtuse angle? A. That which is the most open. Q. And which

is the acute angle? A. That which is the least open. Q. What does

acute mean? A. When the angle is sharp. Q. What does obtuse mean? A.

When the angle is less sharp than the right angle. Q. If I were to

call any one of you an acute child, would you know what I meant? A.

Yes, sir; one that looks out sharp, and tries to think, and pays

attention to what is said to him; and then you would say he was an

acute child.

[Footnote b: Mr. Chambers has been good enough to call the instrument

referred to, a gonograph; to that name I have no objection.]

[Footnote B: Desire the children to hold up two fingers, keeping them

apart, and they will perceive they diverge at top and converge at

bottom.]

\_Equi-lateral Triangle\_.

Q. What is this? A. An equi-lateral triangle. Q. Why is it called

equi-lateral? A. Because its sides are all equal. Q. How many sides

has it? A. Three sides. Q. How many angles has it? A. Three angles.

Q. What do you mean by angles? A. The space between two right lines,

drawn gradually nearer to each other, till they meet in a point.

Q. And what do you call the point where the two lines meet? A. The

angular point. Q. Tell me why you call it a tri-angle. A. We call it a

tri-angle because it has three angles. Q. What do you mean by equal?

A. When the three sides are of the same length. Q. Have you any thing

else to observe upon this? A. Yes, all its angles are acute.

\_Isoceles Triangle\_.

Q. What is this? A. An acute-angled isoceles triangle. Q. What does

acute mean? A. When the angles are sharp. Q. Why is it called an

isoceles triangle? A. Because only two of its sides are equal. Q. How

many sides has it? A. Three, the same as the other. Q. Are there any

other kind of isoceles triangles? A. Yes, there are right-angled and

obtuse-angled.

[Here the other triangles are to be shewn, and the master must explain

to the children the meaning of right-angled and obtuse-angled.]

\_Scalene Triangle\_.

Q. What is this? A. An acute-angled scalene triangle. Q. Why is it

called an acute-angled scalene triangle? A. Because all its angles are

acute, and its sides are not equal. Q. Why is it called scalene? A.

Because it has all its sides \_unequal\_. Q. Are there any other kind of

scalene triangles? A. Yes, there is a right-angled scalene triangle,

which has one right angle. Q. What else? A. An obtuse-angled scalene

triangle, which has one obtuse angle. Q. Can an acute triangle be an

equi-lateral triangle? A. Yes, it may be equilateral, isoceles, or

scalene. Q. Can a right-angled triangle, or an obtuse-angled triangle,

be an equilateral? A. No; it must be either an isoceles or a scalene

triangle.

\_Square\_.

Q. What is this? A. A square. Q. Why is it called a square? A. Because

all its angles are right angles, and its sides are equal. Q. How many

angles has it? A. Four angles. Q. What would it make if we draw a

line from one angle to the opposite one? A. Two right-angled isoceles

triangles. Q. What would you call the line that we drew from one angle

to the other? A. A diagonal. Q. Suppose we draw another line from the

other two angles. A. Then it would make four triangles.

\_Pent-agon\_.

Q. What is this? A. A regular pentagon. Q. Why is it called a

pentagon? A. Because it has five sides and five angles. Q. Why is it

called regular? A. Because its sides and angles are equal. Q. What

does pentagon mean? A. A five-sided figure. Q. Are there any other

kinds of pentagons? A. Yes, irregular pentagons? Q. What does

irregular mean? A. When the sides and angles are not equal.

\_Hex-agon\_.

Q. What is this? A. A hexagon. Q. Why is it called a hexagon? A.

Because it has six sides and six angles. Q. What does hexagon mean? A.

A six-sided figure. Q. Are there more than one sort of hexagons? A.

Yes, there are regular and irregular. Q. What is a regular hexagon?

A. When the sides and angles are all equal. Q. What is an irregular

hexagon? A. When the sides and angles are not equal.

\_Hept-agon\_.

Q. What is this? A. A regular heptagon. Q. Why is it called a

heptagon? A. Because it has seven sides and seven angles. Q. Why is it

called a regular heptagon? A. Because its sides and angles are equal.

Q. What does a heptagon mean? A. A seven-sided figure. Q. What is

an irregular heptagon? A. A seven-sided figure, whose sides are not

equal.

\_Oct-agon\_.

Q. What is this? A. A regular octagon. Q. Why is it called a regular

octagon? A. Because it has eight sides and eight angles, and they are

all equal. Q. What does an octagon mean? A. An eight-sided figure. Q.

What is an irregular octagon? A. An eight-sided figure, whose sides

and angles are not all equal. Q. What does an octave mean? A. Eight

notes in music.

\_Non-agon\_.

Q. What is this? A. A nonagon. Q. Why is it called a nonagon? A.

Because it has nine sides and nine angles. Q. What does a nonagon

mean? A. A nine-sided figure. Q. What is an irregular nonagon? A. A

nine-sided figure whose sides and angles are not equal.

\_Dec-agon\_.

Q. What is this? A. A regular decagon. Q. What does a decagon mean? A.

A ten-sided figure. Q. Why is it called a decagon? A. Because it has

ten sides and ten angles, and there are both regular and irregular

decagons.

\_Rect-angle or Oblong\_.

Q. What is this? A. A rectangle or oblong. Q. How many sides and

angles has it? A. Four, the same as a square. Q. What is the

difference between a rectangle and a square? A. A rectangle has two

long sides, and the other two are much shorter, but a square has its

sides equal.

\_Rhomb\_.

Q. What is this? A. A rhomb. Q. What is the difference between a rhomb

and a rectangle? A. The sides of the rhomb are equal, but the sides of

the rectangle are not all equal. Q. Is there any other difference? A.

Yes, the angles of the rectangle are equal, but the rhomb has only its

opposite angles equal.

\_Rhomboid\_.

Q. What is this? A. A rhomboid. Q. What is the difference between a

rhomb and a rhomboid? A. The sides of the rhomboid are not equal, nor

yet its angles, but the sides of the rhomb are equal.

\_Trapezoid\_.

Q. What is this. A. A trapezoid. Q. How many sides has it? A. Four

sides and four angles, it has only two of its angles equal, which are

opposite to each other.

\_Tetragon\_.

Q. What do we call these figures that have four sides. A. Tetragons,

\_tetra\_ meaning four. Q. Are they called by another name? A. Yes,

they are called quadrilaterals, or quadrangles. Q. How many regular

tetragons are among those we have mentioned? A. One, that is the

square, all the others are irregular tetragons, because their sides

and angles are not all equal. Q. By what name would you call the whole

of the figures on this board? A. Polygons; those that have their sides

and angles equal we would call regular polygons. Q. What would you

call those angles whose sides were not equal? A. Irregular polygons,

and the smallest number of sides a polygon can have is three, and the

number of corners are always equal to the number of sides.

\_Ellipse or Oval\_.

Q. What is this? A. An ellipse or an oval. Q. What shape is the top or

crown of my bat? A. Circular. Q. What shape is that part which comes

on my forehead and the back part of my head? A. Oval.

The other polygons are taught the children in rotation, in the same

simple manner, all tending to please and edify them.

The following is sung:--

Horizontal, perpendicular,

Horizontal, perpendicular,

Parallel, parallel,

Parallel, lines,

Diverging, converging, diverging lines,

Diverging, converging, diverging lines.

Spreading wider, or expansion,

Drawing nearer, or contraction,

Falling, rising,

Slanting, crossing,

Convex, concave, curved lines,

Convex, concave, curved lines.

Here's a wave line, there's an angle,

Here's a wave line, there's an angle;

An ellipsis,

Or an oval,

A semicircle half way round,

Then a circle wheeling round.

Some amusing circumstances have occured from the knowledge of form

thus acquired.

"D'ye ken, Mr. Wilderspin," said a child at Glasgow one day, "that we

have an oblong table: it's made o' deal; four sides, four corners, twa

lang sides, and twa short anes; corners mean angles, and angles mean

corners. My brother ga'ed himsel sic a clink o' the eye against ane at

hame; but ye ken there was nane that could tell the shape o' the thing

that did it!"

A little boy was watching his mother making pan-cakes and wishing

they were all done; when, after various observations as to their

comparative goodness with and without sugar, he exclaimed, "I wonder

which are best, \_elliptical\_ pan-cakes or \_circular\_ ones!" As this

was Greek to the mother she turned round with "What d'ye say?" When

the child repeated the observation. "Bless the child!" said the

astonished parent, "what odd things ye are always saying; what can you

mean by liptical pancakes? Why, you little fool, don't you know they

are made of flour and eggs, and did you not see me put the milk into

the large pan and stir all up together?" "Yes," said the little

fellow, "I know what they are made of, and I know what bread is

made of, but that is'nt the shape; indeed, indeed, mother, they are

\_elliptical pan-cakes\_, because they are made in an \_elliptical

frying-pan\_." An old soldier who lodged in the house, was now called

down by the mother, and he decided that the child was right, and far

from being what, in her surprize and alarm, she took him to be.

On another occasion a little girl had been taken to market by her

mother, where she was struck by the sight of the carcasses of six

sheep recently killed, and said, "Mother, what are these?" The reply

was, "Dead sheep, dead sheep, don't bother." "They are suspended,

perpendicular, and parallels," rejoined the child. "What? What?" was

then the question. "Why, mother," was the child's answer, "don't you

see they hang up, that's suspended; they are straight up, that's

perpendicular; and they are at equal distances, that's parallel."

On another occasion a child came crying to school, at having been

beaten for contradicting his father, and begged of me to go to his

father and explain; which I did. The man received me kindly, and told

me that he had beaten the child for insisting that the table which

he pointed out was not \_round\_, which he repeated was against all

evidence of the senses; that the child told him that if it was round,

nothing would stand upon it, which so enraged him, that he thrashed

him, as he deserved, and sent him off to school, adding, to be thus

contradicted by a child so young, was too bad. The poor little fellow

stood between us looking the picture of innocence combined with

oppression, which his countenance fully developed, but said not a

word. Under the said table there happened to be a ball left by a

younger child. I took it up and kindly asked the man the shape of it?

he instantly replied, "\_Round\_." "Then," said I, "is that table the

same shape as the ball?" The man thought for a minute, and then said,

"It is \_round-flat\_." I then explained the difference to him between

the one and the other, more accurately, of course, than the infant

could; and told him, as he himself saw a distinction, it was evident

they were not both alike, and told him that the table was circular.

"Ah!" said be, "that is just what the little one said! but I did not

understand what circular meant; but now I see he is right." The

little fellow was so pleased, that he ran to his father directly with

delight. The other could not resist the parental impulse, but seized

the boy and kissed him heartily.

The idea of \_size\_ is necessary to a correct apprehension of objects.

To talk of yards, feet, or inches, to a child, unless they are shown,

is just as intelligible as miles, leagues, or degrees. Let there then

be two five-feet rods, a black foot and a white foot alternately, the

bottom foot marked in inches, and let there be a horizontal piece to

slide up and down to make various heights. Thus, when the height of a

lion, or elephant, &c. &c., is mentioned, it may be shown by the rod;

while the girth may be exhibited by a piece of \_cord\_, which should

always be ready. Long measure is taught as follows:

Take barley-corns of mod'rate length,

And three you'll find will make an inch;

Twelve inches make a foot;--if strength

Permit; I'll leap it and not flinch.

Three feet's a yard, as understood

By those possess'd with sense and soul;

Five feet and half will make a rood,

And also make a perch or pole.

Oh how pretty, wond'rously pretty,

Every rule

We learn at school

Is wondrously pretty.

Forty such poles a furlong make,

And eight such furlongs make a mile,

O'er hedge, or ditch, or seas, or lake;

O'er railing, fence, or gate, or stile.

Three miles a league, by sea or land,

And twenty leagues are one degree;

Just four times ninety degrees a band

Will make to girt the earth and sea.

Oh how pretty, &c.

But what's the girth of hell or heaven?

(No natural thought or eye can see,)

To neither girth or length is given;

'Tis without space--Immensity.

Still shall the good and truly wise,

The seat of heaven with safety find;

Because 'tis seen with inward eyes,

The first resides within their mind.

Oh how pretty, &c.

Whatever can be shewn by the rod should be, and I entreat teachers not

to neglect this part of their duty. If the tables be merely learnt,

the children will be no wiser than before.

Another anecdote may be added here, to shew that children even under

punishment may think of their position with advantage. Doctor J., of

Manchester, sent two of his children to an infant school, for the

upper classes, and one of his little daughters had broken some rule in

conjunction with two other little ladies in the same school; two of

the little folks were placed, one in each corner of the room, and Miss

J. was placed in the centre, when the child came home in the evening,

Doctor J. enquired, "Well, Mary, how have you got on at school to

day?" the reply was "Oh, papa, little Miss ---- and Fanny ----, and I,

were put out, they were put in the corners and I in the middle of the

room, and there we all stood, papa, a complete \_triangle\_ of dunces."

The worthy doctor took great pleasure in mentioning this anecdote

in company, as shewing the effect of a judicious cultivation of the

thinking faculties.

In my peregrinations by sea and land, with infants, we have had some

odd and amusing scenes. I sometimes have had infants at sea for

several days and nights to the great amusement of the sailors: I have

seen some of these fine fellows at times in fits of laughter at the

odd words, as they called them, which the children used; at other

times I have seen some of them in tears, at the want of knowledge,

they saw in themselves; and when they heard the infants sing on deck,

and explain the odd words by things in the ship, the sailors were

delighted to have the youngsters in their berths, and no nurse could

take better care of them than these noble fellows did.

I could relate anecdote after anecdote to prove the utility of this

part of our system, but as it is now more generally in the training

juvenile schools, and becoming better known, it may not be necessary,

especially as the prejudice against it is giving way, and the public

mind is better informed than it was on the subject, and moreover it

must be given more in detail in the larger work on Juvenile Training

or National Education.

CHAPTER XIV.

GEOGRAPHY.

\_Its attraction for children--Sacred Geography-Geographical song--and

lesson on geography\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"From sea to sea, from realm to realm I rove."--\_Tickell\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

Geography is to children a delightful study. We give some idea of

it at an early period in infant schools, by singing, "London is the

capital, the capital, the capital, London is the capital, the capital

of England," and other capitals in the same way; and also by pictures

of the costumes of the various people of the world. To teach the four

quarters of the globe, we tell children the different points of the

play-ground, and then send them to the eastern, western, northern, or

southern quarters, as we please. A weathercock should also be placed

at the top of the school, and every favourable day opportunities

should be seized by the teachers to give practical instructions upon

it.[A]

[Footnote A: If the lesson is on objects it will shew how children are

taught the points of the compass, with which we find they are very

much delighted, the best proof that can be given that it is not

injurious to the faculties.]

Sacred geography is of great importance, and children are much pleased

at finding out the spots visited by our Saviour, or the route of the

apostle Paul.

THE EARTH.

The earth, on which we all now live,

Is called a globe--its shape I'll give;

If in your pocket you've a ball,

You have it's shape,--but that's not all;

For land and water it contains,

And presently I'll give their names.

The quarters are called, Africa,

Europe, Asia, and America;

These contain straits, oceans, seas,

Continents, promontories,

Islands, rivers, gulfs, or bays,

Isthmusses, peninsulas,--

Each divides or separates

Nations, kingdoms, cities, states,--

Mountains, forests, hills, and dales,

Dreary deserts, rocks, and vales.

In forests, deserts, bills, and plains,

Where feet have never trod,

There still in mighty power, He reigns,

An ever-present God.

THE CARDINAL POINTS.

The \_east\_ is where the sun does rise

Each morning, in the glorious skies;

Full \_west\_ he sets, or hides his head,

And points to us the time for bed;

He's in the \_south\_ at dinner time;

The \_north\_ is facing to a line.

The above can be given as a gallery lesson, and it will at once be

seen that it requires explanation: the explanation is given by the

teacher in the same way as we have hinted at in former lessons, though

for the sake of those teachers who may not be competent to do it, we

subjoin the following:

Q. Little children what have we been singing about? A. The earth on

which we live. Q. What is the earth called? A. A globe. Q. What is the

shape of a globe? A. Round, like an orange. Q. Is the earth round,

like an orange? A. Yes. Q. Does it always stand still? A. No, it goes

round the sun. Q. How often does it go round the sun in a year? A.

Once. Q. Does it go round anything else but the sun? A. Yes, round its

own axis, in the same way as you turn the balls round on the wires

of the arithmeticon. Q. What are these motions called? A. Its motion

round the sun is called its annual or yearly motion. Q. What is its

other motion called? A. Its diurnal or daily motion. Q. What is caused

by its motion round the sun? A. The succession of summer, winter,

spring, and autumn, which are called the four seasons, is caused by

this. Q. What is caused by its daily motion round its own axis? A. Day

and night. Q. Into what two principal things is this earth on which we

live divided? A. Into land and water. Q. Into how many great parts is

the globe divided? A. Into five. Q. Which are they? A. Europe, Asia,

Africa, America, and Australia. Q. Which part do you live in? A. In

Europe. Q. We sung that those great parts contained

Straits, oceans, seas,

Continents, promontories,

Islands, rivers, gulfs, or bays,

Isthmusses, peninsulas.

Q. What is a strait? A. A narrow part of the sea joining one great sea

to another. Q. What is an ocean? A. A very large sea. Q. What is a

gulf or bay? A. A part of the sea running a long way into the land.

Q. What is a continent? A. A very large tract of land. Q. What does a

continent contain? A. Nations and kingdoms, such as England. Q. What

more? A. Many cities and towns. Q. What more? A. Mountains. Q What are

mountains? A. Very high steep places. Q. What more does a continent

contain? A. Forests, hills, deserts, and valleys. Q. What is a forest?

A. Many large trees growing over a great deal of the land is a forest.

Q. What are hills? A. Parts of the ground which rise higher than the

rest. Q. What is a desert? A. A part of the earth where nothing will

grow, and which is covered with hot sand. Q. What is a valley? A. A

part of the earth which is lower than the rest, with hills at each

side. Q. Who made all that we have been speaking of? A. Almighty God.

I can remember the time when no national school in England possessed

a \_map\_. It was thought dangerous to teach geography, as in fact

anything but cramming the memory, and reading and writing. With regard

to the reading I will say nothing as to how much was understood,

explaining then, was out of the question. What a change have I lived

to see!

CHAPTER XV.

PICTURES AND CONVERSATION.

\_Pictures--Religious instruction--Specimens of picture lessons

on Scripture and natural history--other means of religious

instruction--Effects of religious instruction--observation\_.

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"The parents of Dr. Doddridge brought him up in the early knowledge of

religion. Before he could read, his mother taught him the histories of

the Old and New Testament, by the assistance of some Dutch tiles in

the chimney of the room where they usually sat; and accompanied her

instructions with such wise and pious reflections, as make strong and

lasting impressions upon his heart"--\_See his Life\_.[A]

[Footnote A: This gave me the idea of introducing Scripture pictures

for the infants; and that they are successful can be vouched for by

hundreds of teachers besides myself.]

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To give the children general information, it has been found advisable

to have recourse to pictures of natural history, such as of birds,

beasts, fishes, flowers, insects, &c., all of which tend to shew the

glory of God; and as colours attract the attention of children as soon

as any thing, they eagerly inquire what such a thing is, and this

gives the teacher an opportunity of instructing them to great

advantage; for when a child of his own free will eagerly desires to be

informed, he is sure to profit by the information then imparted.

We use also pictures of public buildings, and of the different trades;

by the former, the children acquire much information, from the

explanations which are given to them of the use of buildings, in what

year they were built, &c.; whilst by the latter, we are enabled to

find out the bias of a child's inclination. Some would like to be

shoemakers, others builders, others weavers, others brewers, &c.;

in short it is both pleasing and edifying to hear the children give

answers to the different questions. I remember one little boy, who

said he should like to be a doctor; and when asked why he made choice

of that profession in preference to any other, his answer was,

"Because he should like to cure all the sick people." If parents did

but study the inclinations of their children a little more, I humbly

conceive, that there would be more eminent men in every profession

than there are. It is great imprudence to determine what business

children shall be of before their tempers and inclinations are well

known. Every one is best in his own profession--and this should not be

determined on rashly and carelessly.

But as it is possible that a person may be very clever in his business

or profession, and yet not be a Christian, it has been thought

necessary to direct the children's attention particularly to the

Scriptures. Many difficulties lie in our way; the principal one arises

not from their inability to read the Bible, nor from their inability

to comprehend it, but from the apathy of the heart to its divine

principles and precepts. Some parents, indeed, are quite delighted if

their children can read a chapter or two in the Bible, and think that

when they can do this, they have arrived at the summit of knowledge,

without once considering whether they understand a single sentence of

what they read, or whether, if they understand it, they \_feel\_ its

truth and importance. And how can it be expected that they should

do either, when no ground-work has been laid at the time when they

received their first impressions and imbibed their first ideas? Every

one comes into the world without ideas, yet with a capacity to receive

knowledge of every kind, and is therefore capable, to a certain

extent, of becoming intelligent and wise. An infant would take hold

of the most poisonous reptile, that might sting him to death in an

instant; or attempt to stroke the lion with as little fear as he would

the lamb; in short, he is incapable of distinguishing a friend from

a foe. And yet so wonderfully is man formed by his adorable Creator,

that he is capable of increasing his knowledge, and advancing towards

perfection to all eternity, without ever being able to arrive at the

summit.

I am the ardent friend of \_religious\_ education, but what I thus

denominate I must proceed to explain; because of the errors that

abound on this subject. Much that bears the name is altogether

unworthy of it. Moral and religious sentiments may be written as

copies; summaries of truth, admirable in themselves, may be deposited

in the memory; chapter after chapter too may be repeated by rote, and

yet, after all, the slightest salutary influence may not be exerted

on the mind or the heart. These may resemble "the way-side" in the

parable, on which the fowls of the air devoured the corn as soon as

it was sown; and hence those plans should be devised and pursued from

which we may anticipate a harvest of real good. On these, however, my

limits will only allow a few hints.

As soon as possible, I would have a distinction made between the form

and power of religion; between the grimaces and long-facedness so

injurious to multitudes, and that principle of supreme love to God

which he alone can implant in the heart. I would exhibit too that

"good will to man" which the gospel urges and inspires, which regards

the human race apart from all the circumstances of clime, colour,

or grade; and which has a special reference to those who are most

necessitous. And how can this be done more hopefully than by

inculcating, in dependence on the divine blessing, the history,

sermons, and parables of our Lord Jesus Christ; and by the simple,

affectionate, and faithful illustration and enforcement of other parts

of holy writ? The infant system, therefore, includes a considerable

number of Scripture lessons, of which the following are specimens:

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

The following method is adopted:--The picture being suspended against

the wall, and one class of the children standing opposite to it, the

master repeats the following passages: "And Joseph dreamed a dream,

and he told it to his brethren; and they hated him yet the more. And

he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, the dream which I have dreamed;

for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo! my sheaf

arose and also stood upright; and behold, your sheaves stood round

abort, and made obeisance to my sheaf."

The teacher being provided with a pointer will point to the picture,

and put the following questions, or such as he may think better, to

the children:

Q. What is this? A. Joseph's first dream. Q. What is a dream? A. When

you dream, you see things during the time of sleep. Q. Did any of you

ever dream any thing?

Here the children will repeat what they have dreamed; perhaps

something like the following:--Please, sir, once I dreamed I was in a

garden. Q. What did you see? A. I saw flowers and such nice apples. Q.

How do you know it was a dream? A. Because, when I awoke, I found I

was in bed.

During this recital the children will listen very attentively, for

they are highly pleased to hear each other's relations. The master

having satisfied himself that the children, in some measure,

understand the nature of a dream, he may proceed as follows:--

Q. What did Joseph dream about first? A. He dreamed that his brother's

sheaves made obeisance to his sheaf. Q. What is a sheaf? A. A bundle

of corn. Q. What do you understand by making obeisance? A. To bend

your body, which we call making a bow. Q. What is binding sheaves? A.

To bind them, which they do with a band of twisted straw. Q. How many

brothers had Joseph? A. Eleven. Q. What was Joseph's father's name? A.

Jacob, he is also sometimes called Israel.

Master.--And it is further written concerning Joseph, that he dreamed

yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, I

have dreamed a dream more; and behold the sun and moon and eleven

stars made obeisance to me.

Q. What do you understand by the sun? A. The sun is that bright object

in the sky which shines in the day-time, and which gives us heat and

light. Q. Who made the sun? A. Almighty God. Q. For what purpose did

God make the sun? A. To warm and nourish the earth and every thing

upon it. Q. What do you mean by the earth? A. The ground on which we

walk, and on which the corn, trees, and flowers grow. Q. What is it

that makes them grow? A. The heat and light of the sun. Q. Does it

require any thing else to make them grow? A. Yes; rain, and the

assistance of Almighty God. Q. What is the moon? A. That object which

is placed in the sky, and shines in the night, and appears larger than

the stars. Q. What do you mean by the stars? A. Those bright objects

that appear in the sky at night. Q. What are they? A. Some of them are

worlds, and others are suns to give them light. Q. Who placed them

there? A. Almighty God. Q. Should we fear and love him for his

goodness? A. Yes; and for his mercy towards us. Q. Do you think it

wonderful that God should make all these things? A. Yes. Q. Are there

any more things that are wonderful to you? A. Yes;--

Where'er we turn our wondering eyes,

His power and skill we see;

Wonders on wonders grandly rise,

And speak the Deity.

Q. Who is the Deity? A. Almighty God.

Nothing can be a greater error than to allow the children to use the

name of God on every trifling occasion. Whenever it is necessary, it

should, in my opinion, be commenced with Almighty, first, both by

teacher and scholars. I am convinced, from what I have seen in many

places, that the frequent repetition of his holy name has a very

injurious effect.

SOLOMON'S WISE JUDGMENT.

Q. What is this? A. A picture of Solomon's wise judgment. Q. Describe

what you mean? A. Two women stood before king Solomon. Q. Did the

women say any thing to the king when they came before him? A. Yes; one

woman said, O my Lord, I and this woman dwell in one house, and I had

a child there, and this woman had a child also, and this woman's child

died in the night. Q. To whom did the women speak when they said, O my

Lord? A. To king Solomon. Q. What did the woman mean when she said, we

dwell in one house? A. She meant that they both lived in it. Q. Did

the woman say any thing more to the king? A. Yes; she said the other

woman rose at midnight, and took her son from her. Q. What is meant by

midnight? A. Twelve o'clock, or the middle of the night. Q. What did

the other woman say in her defence? A. She said the live child was

hers, and the other said it is mine; this they spake before the king.

Q. When the king heard what the women had to say, what did he do? A.

He said bring me a sword; and they brought a sword before the king. Q.

Did the king do any thing with the sword? A. No; he said, divide the

child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Q. What

did the women say to that? A. One said, O my Lord, give her the living

child, and in nowise slay it; but the other said, let it be neither

mine nor thine, but divide it. Q. What took place next? A. The king

answered and said, Give her the living child, and in nowise slay it,

she is the mother thereof. Q. What is meant by slaying? A. To kill any

thing. Q. To which woman was the child given? A. To the woman that

said do not hurt it. Q. What is the reason that it was called a wise

judgment? A. Because Solomon took a wise method to find it out. Q. Did

the people hear of it? A. Yes, all Israel heard of it, and they

feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do

judgment. Q. What is meant by all Israel? A. All the people over whom

Solomon was king? Q. If we want to know any more about Solomon where

can we find it? A. In the third chapter of the first book of Kings.

\_Incidental Conversation\_.

Q. Now my little children, as we have been talking about king Solomon,

suppose we talk about our own king; so let me ask you his name? A.

King William the Fourth.[A] Q. Why is he called king? A. Because he is

the head man, and the governor of the nation. Q. What does governor

mean? A. One that governs the people, the same as you govern and

manage us. Q. Why does the king wear a crown on his head? A. To denote

that he governs from a principle of wisdom, proceeding from love.

Q. Why does he hold a sceptre in his hand? A. To denote that he is

powerful, and that he governs from a principle of truth. Q. What is a

crown? A. A thing made of gold overlaid with a number of diamonds and

precious stones, which are very scarce? Q. What is a sceptre? A. A

thing made of gold, and something like an officer's staff. Q. What is

an officer? A. A person who acts in the king's name; and there are

various sorts of officers, naval officers, military officers, and

civil officers. Q. What is a naval officer? A. A person who governs

the sailors, and tells them what to do. Q. What is a military officer?

A. A person who governs the soldiers, and tells them what to do. Q.

What does a naval officer and his sailors do? A. Defend us from our

enemies on the sea. Q. What does a military officer and his soldiers

do? A. Defend us from our enemies on land. Q. Who do you call enemies?

A. Persons that wish to hurt us and do us harm. Q. What does a civil

officer do? A. Defend us from our enemies at home. Q. What do you mean

by enemies at home? A. Thieves, and all bad men and women. Q. Have

we any other enemies besides these? A. Yes, the enemies of our own

household, as we may read in the Bible, and they are the worst of all.

Q. What do you mean by the enemies of our own household? A. Our bad

thoughts and bad inclinations. Q. Who protects and defends us from

these? A. Almighty God. Q. Are there any other kind of officers

besides these we have mentioned? A. Yes, a great many more, such as

the king's ministers, the noblemen and gentlemen in both houses

of parliament, and the judges of the land. Q. What do the king's

ministers do? A. Give the king advice when he wants it. Q. And what do

the noblemen and gentlemen do in both houses of parliament? A. Make

laws to govern us, protect us, and make us happy. Q. After they have

made the laws, who do they take them to? A. To the king. Q. What do

they take them to the king for? A. To ask him if he will be pleased to

approve of them. Q. What are laws? A. Good rules for the people to go

by, the same as we have rules in our school to go by. Q. Suppose the

people break these good rules, what is the consequence? A. They are

taken before the judges, and afterwards sent to prison. Q. Who takes

them before the judge? A. A constable, and afterwards he takes them to

prison, and there they are locked up and punished. Q. Ought we to love

the king? A. Yes, and respect his officers. Q. Do you suppose the king

ever prays to God? A. Yes, every day. Q. What does he pray for? A.

That God would be pleased to make him a wise and good man, so that he

may make all his people happy. Q. What do the Scriptures say about the

king? A. They say that we are to fear God and honour the king. Q. Who

was the wisest king? A. King Solomon. Q. How did he become the wisest

king? A. He asked God to give him wisdom to govern his kingdom well;

and God granted his request. Q. Will God give our king wisdom? A. Yes,

he will give him what is best for him. It says in the Bible, if any

man lack wisdom let him ask of God, for he giveth all men liberally,

and upbraideth not. Q. What is the best book to learn wisdom from? A.

The Bible. Q. Is the queen mentioned in the Bible? A. Yes; it is said

queens shall be thy nursing mothers. Q. Who came to Solomon besides

the two women? A. The queen of Sheba, she came to ask him questions.

Q. When he answered her questions what happened? A. The queen was so

much delighted with his wisdom, that she gave him a hundred and twenty

talents of gold, and spices in abundance. Q. How much is one talent

of gold worth? A. Five thousand, four hundred, and seventy-five

sovereigns. Q. Did she give him anything more? A. Yes, she gave him

precious stones. Q. What are precious stones? A. Diamonds, jasper,

sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolite, beryl,

topaz, chrysoprasus, jacinth, amethyst. Q. Did king Solomon give the

queen of Sheba anything? A. Yes, he gave her whatsoever she desired,

besides that which she brought with her. Q. Where did she go? A. She

went away to her own land. Q. What part of the Bible is this? A. The

ninth chapter of the second book of Chronicles, Master. The queen is

mentioned in other places in the Bible, and another day I will tell in

what parts.

[Footnote A: This lesson was written in the life time of our late

sovereign. It can easily be applied by the judicious teacher, and made

to bear upon present circumstances, and I earnestly hope that her

present gracious Majesty may become patroness of infant education. Not

infant education travestied, but the thing itself.]

THE NATIVITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

The picture being suspended as the others, and a whole class being in

the class-room, put the pointer into one of the children's hands, and

desire the child to find out the Nativity of Jesus Christ. The other

children will be on the tip-toe of expectation, to see whether the

child makes a mistake; for, should this be the case, they know that

one of them will have the same privilege of trying to find it; should

the child happen to touch the wrong picture, the teacher will have at

least a dozen applicants, saying, "Please, sir, may I? Please, sir,

may I?" The teacher having selected the child to make the next trial,

say one of the youngest of the applicants, the child walks round the

room with the pointer, and puts it on the right picture; which will be

always known by the other children calling out, "That is the right,

that is the right." To view the child's sparkling eyes, who has found

the picture, and to see the pleasure beaming forth in his countenance,

you might imagine that be conceived he had performed one of the

greatest wonders of the age. The children will then proceed to read

what is printed on the picture, which is as follows: "The Nativity of

our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" which is printed at the top of the

picture. At the bottom are the following words: "And she brought forth

her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him

in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."--We then

proceed to question them in the following manner:--

Q. What do you mean by the Nativity of Jesus Christ? A. The time he

was born. Q. Where was he born? A. In Bethlehem of Judea. Q. Where did

they lay him? A. In a manger. Q. What is a manger? A. A thing that

horses feed out of. Q. What was the reason they put him there? A.

Because there was no room in the inn. Q. What is an inn? A. A place

where persons lodge who are travelling, and it is like a public house.

Q. What do you mean by travelling? When you go from one place to

another; from London into the country, or from the country into

London. Q. Is any thing else to be understood by travelling? A. Yes,

we are all travelling. Q. What do you mean by all travelling? A. We

are all going in a good road or else in a bad one. Q. What do you mean

by a good road? A. That which leads to heaven. Q. What will lead us to

heaven? A. Praying to God and endeavouring to keep his commandments,

and trying all we can to be good children. Q. Can we make ourselves

good? A. No; we can receive nothing, except it be given us from

heaven. Q. What is travelling in a bad road? A. Being naughty

children, and not minding what is said to us; and when we say bad

words, or steal any thing, or take God's name in vain. Q. Where will

this road lead to? A. To eternal misery.

Here we usually give a little advice according to circumstances,

taking care always to avoid long speeches, that will tend to stupify

the children. If they appear tired, we stop, but if not, they repeat

the following hymn, which I shall insert in full, as I believe there

is nothing in it that any Christian would object to.

Hark! the skies with music sound!

Heavenly glory beams around;

Christ is born! the angels sing,

Glory to the new-born King.

Peace is come, good-will appears,

Sinners, wipe away your tears;

God in human flesh to-day

Humbly in the manger lay.

Shepherds tending flocks by night,

Heard the song, and saw the light;

Took their reeds, and softest strains

Echo'd through the happy plains.

Mortals, hail the glorious King

Richest incense cheerful bring;

Praise and love Emanuel's name,

And his boundless grace proclaim.

The hymn being concluded, we put the following questions to the

children:

Q. Who was the new-born king? A. Jesus Christ. Q. Who are sinners? A.

We, and all men. Q. What are flocks? A. A number of sheep. Q. What are

shepherds? A. Those who take care of the sheep. Q. What are plains? A.

Where the sheep feed. Q. Who are mortals? A. We are mortals. Q. Who

is the glorious king? A. Jesus Christ. Q. What is meant by Emanuel's

name? A. Jesus Christ.

Here the teacher can inform the children, that Jesus Christ is called

by a variety of names in the Bible, and can repeat them to the

children if he thinks proper; for every correct idea respecting

the Saviour which he can instil into their minds will serve as a

foundation for other ideas, and he will find that the more ideas the

children have, the more ready they will be in answering his questions;

for man is a progressive being; his capacity for progression is his

grand distinction above the brutes.

LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD.

The picture being suspended as before described, we proceed thus:--

Q. What is this? A. Jesus Christ raising Lazarus from the dead. Q. Who

was Lazarus? A. A man who lived in a town called Bethany, and a friend

of Christ's. Q. What is a town? A. A place where there are a great

number of houses, and persons living in them. Q. What do you mean by a

friend? A. A person that loves you, and does all the good he can for

you, to whom you ought to do the same in return. Q. Did Jesus love

Lazarus? A. Yes, and his sisters, Martha and Mary. Q. Who was it that

sent unto Jesus Christ, and told him that Lazarus was sick? A. Martha

and Mary. Q. What did they say? A. They said, Lord, behold he whom

thou lovest is sick. Q. What answer did Jesus make unto them? A. He

said, this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God. Q.

What did he mean by saying so? A. He meant that Lazarus should be

raised again by the power of God, and that the people that stood by

should see it, and believe on him. Q. How many days did Jesus stop

where he was when he found Lazarus was sick? A. Two days. Q. When

Jesus Christ wanted to leave the place, what did he say to his

disciples? A. He said, let us go into Judea again. Q. What do you mean

by Judea? A. A country where the Jews lived. Q. Did the disciples say

any thing to Jesus Christ, when he expressed a wish to go into Judea

again? A. Yes, they said, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone

thee, and goest thou thither again? Q. What did Jesus Christ tell

them? A. He told them a great many things, and at last told them

plainly that Lazarus was dead. Q. How many days had Lazarus lain in

the grave before he was raised up? A. Four. Q. Who went to meet Jesus

Christ, when she heard that he was coming? A. Martha; but Mary sat

still in the house. Q. Did Martha say anything to Jesus when she met

him? A. Yes, she said, Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had

not died. Q. Did Martha tell her sister that Jesus Christ was come? A.

Yes; she said, the Master is come, and calleth for thee. Q. Did Mary

go to meet Jesus Christ? A. Yes; and when she saw him, she fell down

at his feet, and said, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had

not died. Q. Did Mary weep? A. Yes, and the Jews that were with her.

Q. What is weeping? A. To cry. Q. Did Jesus weep? A. Yes; and the Jews

said, Behold, how he loved him. Q. Did the Jews say any thing else? A.

Yes; they said, Could not this man that opened the eyes of the blind,

have caused that even this man should not have died? Q. What took

place next? A. He went to the grave, and told the persons that stood

by to take away the stone. Q. And when they took away the stone, what

did Jesus Christ do? A. He cried, with a loud voice, Lazarus, come

forth; and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot, with

grave clothes, and his face was bound about with a napkin.--Jesus

saith unto them, loose him, and let him go; and many of the Jews which

came to Mary, and had seen these things which Jesus did, believed

on him. Q. If we wanted any more information about Lazarus and his

sisters, where should we find it? A. In the Bible. Q. What part? A.

The eleventh and twelfth chapters of John.

I have had children at the early age of four years, ask me questions

that I could not possibly answer; and among other things, the children

have said, when being examined at this picture, "That if Jesus Christ

had cried, softly, Lazarus, come forth, he would have come."--And when

asked, why they thought so, they have answered, "Because God can do

anything;" which is a convincing proof that children, at a very early

age, have an idea of the Omnipotence of the Supreme Being. Oh, that

men would praise the Lord for his goodness to the children of men!

PICTURE OF THE LAST SUPPER.

Q. What is this? A. A picture of the Last Supper. Q. What do you mean

by the last supper? A. A sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ himself.

Q. What do you understand by a sacrament? A. There are two sacraments,

baptism and the holy supper, and they are both observed by true

Christians. Q. We will speak about baptism presently, but as we have

the picture of the holy supper before as, let me ask if it is called

by any other name? A. Yes; it is said that Jesus kept the passover

with his disciples, and when the even was come he sat down with them,

and as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it,

and gave to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is my body. Q. What

took place next? A. He took the cup, and when he had given thanks,

he gave it them, saying, This is my blood, the blood of the New

Testament, which is shed for many. Q. Did Jesus command this ordinance

to be observed by his people? A. Yes; he said in another place, This

do in remembrance of me (Luke xxii. 19). Q. What ought those persons

to remember who do this? A. They should remember that Jesus Christ

died on the cross to save sinners. Q. Is any thing else to be

understood by the sacrament of the Lord's supper? A. Yes, a great deal

more. Q. Explain some of it. A. When they drink the wine, they should

recollect that they ought to receive the truth of God into their

understandings. Q. What will be the effect of receiving the truth

of God into our understandings? A. It will expel or drive out all

falsehood. Q. What ought they to recollect when they eat the bread?

A. They should recollect that they receive the love of God into their

wills and affections. Q. What will be the effect of this? A. It will

drive out all bad passions and evil desires; for it is said, he that

eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him

(John vi. 27). Q. Is any thing more to be understood by these things?

A. Much more, which we must endeavour to learn when we get older. Q.

How will you learn this? A. By reading the Bible and going to a place

of worship.[A]

[Footnote A: There are many more of similar lessons, and, if any

thing, more simple, which accompany the pictures and apparatus which

I supply for Infant Schools; the profits from which will assist to

enable me, if I am blessed with health and strength, still further to

extend the system.]

Allow such things as these to be brought before the infant mind: let

the feelings of the heart, as well as the powers of the understanding,

be called into exercise; let babes have "the pure milk of the Word"

before "the strong meat;" let as little stress as possible be laid on

"the mere letter," and as much as possible on "the spirit" of "the

truth;" let it be shewn that piety is not merely rational, but in the

highest degree practicable; let this be done with diligence, faith,

and prayer, and I hesitate not to say, that we shall have an increase

of the religion of the \_heart\_.

Religious instruction may be given in other ways. Let the teacher take

a flower or an insect, and ask the, children if they could make such a

one; and I never found one who would answer, "Yes." A microscope will

increase the knowledge of its wonders. The teacher may then make a

needle the subject of remark; the children will admit that it is

smooth, very smooth; let him tell them it is the work of man, and

as such will appear imperfect in proportion as it is examined; and

shewing them it through the microscope, they will perceive it is rough

and full of holes. As a contrast, let him take a bee, obtain their

observations on it as it is, give them a short history of it, and they

will acknowledge its superiority over the needle. But on viewing it

through the microscope, astonishment will be increased, and I have

heard many say at such a time, "O sir, how good (meaning \_great\_) God

must be!" The sting may then be pointed out, as \_unlike\_ the needle,

and perfectly smooth; and thus truth may be imparted in a manner the

most interesting and delightful.

The influence of such considerations on \_character\_ is obvious. When

the \_greatness\_ of God is spoken of, allusion may be made to our

pride, and to the importance of humility; his \_goodness\_ may suggest

the evil of unkindness, and the importance of benevolence; and

his \_truth\_ may lead to remarks on its necessity, and the sin of

falsehood.

A small plot of ground may moreover be appropriated to the children;

some grains of wheat, barley, or rye may be sown, and they may be told

that, at a certain time, they will spring forth. Often will they go,

and anxiously watch for this; and at length they will say perhaps,

"Please, sir, such a thing has come up; we know it is so, for it is

just what you said it would be." Week after week the progress of

vegetation will be observed, and the fulfilment of the master's

promise will greatly tend to increase \_his\_ influence. So great will

\_he\_ appear, that his words and commands will be more regarded; while

it will be his object to trace the wonders which he predicted to their

divine Source. I have frequently observed, on such occasions, what I

should term an act of infant worship. Often has the question been put

to me, "Please, sir, is it wicked to play?" as if the spirit were

awed, and transgression against God were regarded with dread. Caution

has been also discovered in the use of the divine name; and I have

listened with delight to such remarks as these: "Please, sir, when we

sing a hymn, we may say Gad, or if we talk about the sun, we may say

God made it; and it isn't taking his name in vain, is it? But when we

talk of God as boys do in the street, that is very wicked!"

The following facts will illustrate the benefit of scriptural

instruction.

A little boy, about four years and a half old, belonging to an Infant

School, went to see his cousin, a little girl about his own age. At

bed-time, the little boy, to his great surprise, saw her get into bed

without having said her prayers. The little fellow immediately went up

to the side of the bed, and put this question to her: "Which would you

rather go to, heaven or hell?" The little girl said, "I don't know!"

"Not know!" said the boy; "Why, wicked people go to hell, and the

good go to heaven, a happy place." The little girl then said, "Why,

I should like to go to heaven." "Ah!" but replied the little fellow

again, "You did not say your prayers; and all that go heaven pray to

God." She then said, "Will you teach me to pray your prayer?" "If

I lived with you," said he, "I would; but if you go to the Infant

School, they will teach you to say your prayers, and sing hymns too."

One day, while the teacher of an Infant School was speaking to his

little children, from the conversation of our Lord with the woman

of Samaria at the well, a gentleman present asked the following

questions: "Where should we go to worship God?" When a little boy

answered, "To a throne of grace." "And where is a throne of grace?"

"Any where," answered the boy; "for where we kneel down, and pray to

God with our hearts, we are \_then\_ at a throne of grace."

There are times when the children are in a better state to receive

religious instruction than others. A teacher of observation will

soon perceive this, and act accordingly; if, however, the thing is

overdone, which it may be, and which I have seen, then the effect is

fatal. Hypocrisy will take the place of sincerity, and the heart will

remain unaffected and unimproved.

A little boy, the subject of the following anecdote, being six years

of age, and forward in his learning, I considered him fit to be sent

to another school; and informed the parents accordingly. The father

came immediately, and said, he hoped I would keep him till he was

seven years of age; adding, that he had many reasons for making the

request. I told him, that it was the design of the Institution to take

such children as no other school would admit; and as his child had

arrived at the age of six, he would be received into the national

school; moreover, as we had a number of applications for the admission

of children much younger, I could not grant his request. He then said,

"I understand that you make use of pictures in the school, and I have

good reason to approve of them; for," said he, "you must know that I

have a large Bible in the house, Matthew Henry's, which was left me by

my deceased mother; like many more, I never looked into it, but kept

it merely for show. The child, of course, was forbidden to open it,

for fear of its being spoiled: but still he was continually asking me

to read in it, and I as continually denied him; indeed, I had imbibed

many unfavourable impressions concerning this book, and had no

inclination to read it, and was not very anxious that the child

should. However, the child was not to be put off, although

several times I gave him a box on the ear for worrying me; for,

notwithstanding this usage, the child would frequently ask me to read

it, when he thought I was in a good humour; and at last I complied

with his wishes; 'Please, father,' said the child, 'will you read

about Solomon's wise judgment' 'I don't know where to find it,' was

the reply. 'Then,' says the child, 'I will tell you; it is in the

third chapter of the first book of Kings.' I looked as the child

directed, and, finding it, I read it to him. Having done so, I was

about to shut up the book; which the child perceiving, said, 'Now,

please, father, will you read about Lazarus raised from the dead?'

which was done; and, in short," said the father, "he kept me at it for

at least two hours that night, and completely tired me out, for there

was no getting rid of him. The next night be renewed the application,

with 'Please, father, will you read about Joseph and his brethren?'

and he could always tell me where these stories were to be found.

Indeed, he was not contented with my reading it, but would get me into

many difficulties, by asking me to explain that which I knew nothing

about; and if I said I could not tell him, he would tell me that I

ought to go to church, for his master had told him, that that was

the place to learn more about it; adding, 'and I will go with you,

father.' In short, he told me every picture you had in your school,

and kept me so well at it, that I at last got into the habit of

\_reading for myself\_, with some degree of delight; this, therefore, is

one reason why I wish the child to remain in the school." A short time

afterwards, the mother called on me, and told me, that no one could be

happier than she was, for there was so much alteration in her husband

for the better, that she could scarcely believe him to be the same

man. Instead of being in the skittle-ground, in the evening, spending

his money and getting tipsy, he was reading at home to her and his

children; and the money that used to go for gambling, was now going

to buy books, with which, in conjunction with the Bible, they were

greatly delighted, and afforded both him and them a great deal of

pleasure and profit.

Here we see a whole family were made comfortable, and called to a

sense of religion and duty, by the instrumentality of a child of six

years of age. I subsequently made inquiries, and found that the whole

family attended a place of worship, and that their character would

bear the strictest investigation.

The following anecdote will also shew how early impressions are made

on the infant mind, and the effects such impressions may have in the

dying moments of a child. A little boy, between the age of five and

six years, being extremely ill, prevailed on his mother to ask me to

come and see him. The mother called, and stated, that her little boy

said be wanted to see his master so bad, that he would give any thing

if he could see him. The mother likewise said, she should herself be

very much obliged to me if I would come; conceiving that the child

would get better after he had seen me. I accordingly went; and on

seeing the child considered that he could not recover. The moment I

entered the room, the child attempted to rise, but could not. "Well,

my little man," said I, "did you want to see me?" "Yes, Sir, I wanted

to see you very much," answered the child. "Tell me what you wanted

me for." "I wanted to tell you that I cannot come to school again,

because I shall die." "Don't say that," said the mother, "you will

get better, and then you can go to school again." "No," answered the

child, "I shall not get better, I am sure; and I wanted to ask master

to let my class sing a hymn over my body, when they put it in the

pit-hole." The child, having made me promise that this should be done,

observed, "You told me, master, when we used to say the pictures, that

the souls of children never die; and do you think I shall go to God?"

"You ask me a difficult question, my little boy," said I. "Is it,

sir?" said the child, "I am not afraid to die, and I know I shall

die." "Well, child, I should not be afraid to change states with you;

for if such as you do not go to God, I do not know what will become of

such as myself; and from what I know of you, I firmly believe that

you will, and all like you; but you know what I used to tell you at

school." "Yes, sir, I do; you used to tell me that I should pray to

God to assist me to do to others as I would that they should do to

me, as the hymn says; and mother knows that I always said my prayers,

night and morning; and I used to pray for father and mother, master

and governess, and every body else." "Yes, my little man, this is part

of our duty; we should pray for every one; and, I think, if God sees

it needful, he will answer our prayers, especially when they come from

the heart." Here the child attempted to speak, but could not, but

waved his hand, in token of gratitude for my having called; and I can

truly say, that I never saw so much confidence, resignation, and true

dependence on the divine will, manifested by any grown person, on a

death-bed, much less by a child under the tender age of seven years. I

bade the child adieu, and was much impressed with what I had seen. The

next day the mother called on me, and informed me that the child had

quitted his tenement of clay; and that just before his departure had

said to her, and those around him, that the souls of children never

die; it was only the body that died; that he had been told at school,

while they were saying the pictures, that the soul went to God, who

gave it. The mother said that these were the last words the child

was known to utter. She then repeated the request about the children

singing a hymn over his grave, and named the hymn she wished to

have sung. The time arrived for the funeral, and the parents of the

children who were to sing the hymn made them very neat and clean, and

sent them to school. I sent them to the house whence the funeral was

to proceed, and the undertaker sent word that he could not be troubled

with such little creatures, and that unless I attended myself the

children could not go. I told him that I was confident that the

children would be no trouble to him, if he only told them to follow

the mourners two and two, and that it was unnecessary for any one to

interfere with them further than shewing them the way back to the

school. I thought, however, that I would attend to see how the

children behaved, but did not let them see me, until the corpse was

arrived at the ground. As soon as I had got to the ground, some of the

children saw me, and whispered, "There's master;" when several of them

stepped out of the ranks to favour me with a bow. When the corpse was

put into the ground, the children were arranged round the grave, not

one of whom was more than six years of age. One of them gave out the

hymn, in the usual way, and then it was sung by the whole of them;

and, according to the opinions of the by-standers, very well. The

novelty of the thing caused a great number of persons to collect

together; and yet, to their credit, while the children were singing,

there was not a whisper to be heard; and when they had finished the

hymn, the poor people made a collection for the children on the

ground. The minister himself rewarded one or two of them, and they

returned well stored with money, cakes, &c. This simple thing was

the means of making the school more known; for I could hear persons

inquiring, "Where do these children come from?" "Why, don't you know?"

replied others, "from the Infant School." "Well," answered a third,

"I will try to get my children into it; for I should like them to be

there of all things. When do they take them in, and how do they get

them in?" "Why, you must apply on Monday mornings," answered another;

and the following Monday I had no less than forty-nine applications,

all of which I was obliged to refuse, because the school was full.[A]

[Footnote A: This circumstance took place in the heart of London, and

some of the chief actors in it are now men and women; and should

this meet the eye of any of them, I am sure they will not forget the

circumstances, nor entirely forget their old teacher.]

NATURAL HISTORY.

When teachers are conversing with their children, they should always

take care to watch their countenances, and the moment they appear

tired, to stop. An hour's instruction when the children's minds and

hearts are engaged, is better than many hours effort, when they are

thinking of something else. In addition to thirty-four pictures of

Scripture history, we have sixty of natural history, each picture

having a variety of quadrupeds, birds, fishes, and flowers. The first

thing we do is to teach the children the names of the different

things; then to distinguish them by their forms; and, lastly, they are

questioned on them as follows: If the animal is a horse, we put the

pointer to it, and say--

What is this? A. A picture of a horse. Q. What is the use of the

horse? A. To draw carts, coaches, waggons, drays, fire-engines,

caravans, the plough and harrow, boats on the canal, and any thing

that their masters want them. Q. Will they carry as well as draw? A.

Yes, they will carry a lady or gentleman on their backs, a sack of

corn, or paniers, or even little children, but they must not hit them

hard, if they do, they will fall off their backs; besides, it is very

cruel to beat them. Q. What is the difference between carrying and

drawing? A. To carry is when they have the whole weight on their

backs, but to draw is when they pull any thing along. Q. Is there any

difference between those horses that carry, and those horses that

draw? A. Yes; the horses that draw carts, drays, coal-waggons, stage

waggons, and other heavy things, are stouter and much larger, and

stronger than those that carry on the saddle, and are called draught

horses. Q. Where do the draught horses come from? A. The largest

comes from Leicestershire, and some come from Suffolk, which are

very strong, and are called Suffolk punches. Q. Where do the best

saddle-horses come from? A. They came at first from Arabia, the place

in which the camel is so useful; but now it is considered that those

are as good which are bred in England? Q. What do they call a horse

when he is young? A. A foal, or a young colt. Q. Will he carry or draw

while he is young? A. Not until he is taught, which is called breaking

of him in. Q. And when he is broke in, is he very, useful? A. Yes; and

please, sir, we hope to be more useful when we are properly taught.

Q. What do you mean by being properly taught? A. When we have as much

trouble taken with us as the horses and dogs have taken with them. Q.

Why, you give me a great deal of trouble, and yet I endeavour to teach

you. A. Yes, sir, but before Infant Schools were established, little

children, like us, were running the streets.[A] Q. But you ought to

be good children if you do run the streets. A. Please, sir, there is

nobody to tell us how[B], and if the man did not teach the horse, he

would not know how to do his work.

[Footnote A: This answer was given by a child five years of age.]

[Footnote B: This answer was given by a child six years of age.]

Here we observe to the children, that as this animal is so useful to

mankind, it should be treated with kindness. And having questioned

them as to the difference between a cart and a coach, and satisfied

ourselves that they understand the things that are mentioned, we

close, by asking them what is the use of the horse after he is dead,

to which the children reply, that its flesh is eaten by other animals

(naming them), and that its skin is put into pits with oak bark, which

is called tanning; and that when it is tanned it is called leather;

and leather is made into shoes to keep the feet warm and dry, and that

we are indebted to the animals for many things that we both eat and

wear, and above all to the great God for every thing that we possess.

I cannot help thinking that if this plan were more generally adopted,

in all schools, we should not have so many persons ascribing

everything to blind chance, when all nature exhibits a God, who

guides, protects, and continually preserves the whole.

We also examine the children concerning that ill-treated animal, the

ass, and contrast it with the beautiful external appearance of the

zebra; taking care to warn the children not to judge of things by

their outward appearance, which the world in general are too apt to

do, but to judge of things by their uses, and of men by their general

character and conduct. After having examined the children concerning

the animals that are most familiar to us, such as the sheep, the cow,

the dog, and others of a similar kind, we proceed to foreign animals,

such as the camel, the elephant, the tiger, the lion, &c. &c. In

describing the use of the camel and the elephant, there is a fine

field to open the understandings of the children, by stating how

useful the camel is in the deserts of Arabia; how much it can carry;

how long it can go without water; and the reason it can go without

water longer than most other animals; how much the elephant can carry;

what use it makes of its trunk, &c. All these things will assist the

thinking powers of children, and enlarge their understandings, if

managed carefully. We also contrast the beautiful appearance of the

tiger with its cruel and blood-thirsty disposition, and endeavour to

shew these men and women in miniature, that it is a dangerous plan

to judge of things by outward appearances, but that there is a

more correct way of judging, which forms a part of the business of

education to explain.

The children are highly delighted with these pictures, and, of their

own accord, require an explanation of the subjects. Nay, they will

even ask questions that will puzzle the teacher to answer; and

although there is in some minds such a natural barrenness, that, like

the sands of Arabia, they are never to be cultivated or improved,

yet I can safely say, that I never knew a child who did not like the

pictures; and as soon as I had done explaining one, it was always,

"Please, sir, may we learn this?" "Please, teacher, may we learn

that?" In short, I find that I am generally tired before the children;

instead of having to apply any magisterial severity, they are

petitioning to learn; and this mode of teaching possesses an advantage

over every other, because it does not interfere with any religious

opinion, there being no body of Christians that I know, or ever heard

of, who would object to the facts recorded in the Bible, being thus

elucidated by pictures. Thus a ground-work may be laid, not only of

natural history, but of sacred history also; for the objects being

before the children's eyes, they can, in some degree, comprehend them,

and store them in their memories. Indeed, there is such attraction in

pictures, that you can scarcely pass a picture-shop in London, without

seeing a number of grown persons around the windows gazing at them.

When pictures were first introduced into the school, the children told

their parents; many of whom came and asked permission to see them; and

although the plates are very common, I observed a degree of attention

and reverence in the parents, scarcely to be expected, and especially

from those who could not read.

It is generally the case, that what we have always with us, becomes so

familiar, that we set little store by it; but on being deprived of it

for a time, we then set a greater value on it: and I have found this

to be the case with the children. If the pictures we make use of in

the schools be exposed all at once, and at all times, then there would

be such a multiplicity of objects before the eyes of the children,

that their attention would not be fixed by any of them; they would

look at them all, at first, with wonder and surprise, but in a short

time the pictures would cease to attract notice, and, consequently,

the children would think no more of them than they would of the paper

that covers the room. To prevent this, and to excite a desire for

information, it is always necessary to keep some behind, and to let

very few objects appear at one time. When the children understand,

in some measure, the subjects before them, these may be replaced by

others, and so on successively, until the whole have been seen.

Some persons have objected to the picture of Christ being represented

in the human form, alleging that it is calculated to make the children

think he was a mere man only, and have thought it better that be

should not be represented at all; the man that undertakes to please

all will soon find out his mistake, and, therefore, be must do the

best he can, and leave the objectors to please themselves; yet it is

a great pity little children should suffer from the ill-grounded

objections of those who cannot do better. On visiting a school, take

notice of the pictures hanging about, if they are dusty, and have not

the appearance of being well-used, be sure that the committee have

never seen a good infant school, or that the teacher has never been

properly trained, and, therefore, does not know how to use them.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON TEACHING BY OBJECTS.

\_Object Boards--Utility of this Method\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The eyes will greatly aid the ears."

\* \* \* \* \*

As I have before said that it is our object to teach the children from

objects in preference to books, I will mention a method we adopt for

the accomplishment of this purpose. It consists of a number of boards,

of which, and of their use, the following description will convey an

accurate idea.

The boards are about sixteen inches square, and a quarter of an inch

thick: wainscot is the best, as it does not warp. These will go into

the groove of the lesson post: there should be about twenty articles

on each board, or twenty-five, just as it suits the conductors of the

school; there should be the same quantity of things on each board, in

order that all the children may finish at one time; this will not be

the case, if there be more objects on one board than another. I will

give an account of a few of our boards, and that must suffice, or I

shall exceed the limits I have prescribed to myself.

The first board contains a small piece of gold in its rough state, a

piece of gold in its manufactured state, a piece of silver in both

states, a piece of copper in both states, a piece of brass in both

states, a piece of iron in both states, a piece of steel in both

states, a piece of tinfoil, a piece of solder, a screw, a clasp nail,

a clout nail, a hob nail, a spike nail, a sparable, and a tack.

These articles are all on one board, and the monitor puts his pointer

to each article, and tells his little pupils their names, and

encourages them to repeat the names after him. When they finish at one

post they go to the next.

The next board may contain a piece of hemp, a piece of rope, a piece

of string, a piece of bagging, a piece of sacking, a piece of canvass,

a piece of hessian, a piece of Scotch sheeting, a piece of unbleached

linen, a piece of bleached linen, a piece of diaper linen, a piece of

dyed linen, a piece of flax, a piece of thread, a piece of yarn, a

piece of ticking, a piece of raw silk, a piece of twisted silk, a

piece of wove silk, figured, a piece of white plain sills, and a piece

of dyed silk, a piece of ribbon, a piece of silk cord, a piece of silk

velvet, &c.

The next may contain raw cotton, cotton yarn, sewing cotton,

unbleached calico, bleached calico, dimity, jean, fustian, velveteen,

gause, nankeen, gingham, bed furniture, printed calico, marseilles,

flannel, baise, stuff; woollen cloth and wool, worsted, white, black,

and mixed.

The next may contain milled board, paste board, Bristol card, brown

paper, white paper of various sorts, white sheep skin, yellow sheep,

tanned sheep, purple sheep, glazed sheep, red sheep, calf skin, cow

hide, goat skin, kid, seal, pig leather, seal skin, wash leather,

beaver, &c.

The next may contain about twenty-five of those wood animals which

are imported into this country, and are to be had at the foreign toy

warehouses; some of them are carved exceedingly well, and appear very

like the real animals.

The next may contain mahogany, and the various kinds of wood.

The next may contain prunings of the various fruit trees, all about an

inch long, or an inch square.

The next may contain the different small articles of ironmongery,

needles, pins, cutlery, small tools, and every other object that can

be obtained small enough for the purpose.

The lessons are to be put in the lesson-post the same as the picture

lessons; and the articles are either glued, or fastened on the boards

with screws or waxed thread.

I would have dried leaves provided, such as an oak leaf, an elm

leaf, an ash leaf, &c. &c. The leaves of ever-greens should be kept

separate. These will enable a judicious instructor to communicate a

great variety of valuable information.

On some things connected with such instruction I find I arrived at the

same conclusions as Pestalozzi, though I have never read his works,

and for some years after my first efforts, did not know that such

a person existed. I mean, however, to give my views on teaching by

objects more fully in a work I hope soon to prepare, to be entitled

"The Infant Teacher in the Nursery and the School."

The utility of this mode of teaching must be obvious, for if the

children meet with any of those terms in a book which they are

reading, they \_understand them immediately\_, which would not be the

case unless they had seen the \_object\_. The most intellectual person

would not be able to call things by their \_proper names\_, much less

describe them, unless he had been taught, or heard some other person

call them by their right names; and we generally learn more by mixing

with society, than ever we could do at school: these sorts of lessons

persons can make themselves, and they will last for many years, and

help to lay a foundation for things of more importance.

I am convinced the day is not far distant when a museum will be

considered necessary to be attached to every first rate school for the

instruction of children.

Sight is the most direct inlet for knowledge. Whatever we have seen

makes a much stronger impression upon us. Perception is the first

power of mind which is brought into action, and the one made use

of with most ease and pleasure. For this reason object lessons are

indispensable in an infant school, consisting both of real substances

and of pictures. The first lesson in Paradise was of this kind, and we

ought therefore to draw instruction from it. "And out of the ground

the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the

air; and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them: and

whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name of

it."

CHAPTER XVII

PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

\_Exercise--Various positions--Exercise blended with

instruction--Arithmetical and geometrical amusements\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Would you make infants happy, give them variety, for novelty has

charms that our minds can hardly withstand."

\* \* \* \* \*

As an Infant School may be regarded in the light of a combination of

the school and nursery, the \_art of pleasing\_, forms a prominent part

in the system; and as little children are very apt to be fretful, it

becomes expedient to divert as well as teach there. If children of

two years old and under are not diverted, they will naturally cry

for their mothers: and to have ten or twelve children crying in the

school, it is very obvious would put every thing into confusion. But

it is possible to have two hundred, or even three hundred children

assembled together, the eldest not more than six years of age, and yet

not to hear one of them crying for a whole day. Indeed I may appeal to

the numerous and respectable persons who have visited Infant Schools,

for the truth of this assertion; many of whom have declared, in my

hearing, that they could not have conceived it possible that such a

number of little children could be assembled together, and all be so

happy as they had found them, the greater part of them being so very

young. I can assure the reader, that many of the children who have

cried heartily on being sent to school the first day or two, have

cried as much on being kept at home, after they have been in the

school but a very short time: and I am of opinion that when children

are absent, it is generally the fault of the parents. I have had

children come to school without their breakfast, because it has not

been ready; others have come to school without shoes, because they

would not be kept at home while their shoes were mending; and I have

had others come to school half dressed, whose parents have been either

at work or gossipping; and who, when they have returned home, have

thought that their children were lost; but to their great surprise and

joy, when they have applied at the school, they have found them there.

Need any thing more be advanced than these facts, to prove, that it is

not school, or the acquirement of knowledge, that is disagreeable to

children, but the system of injudicious instruction there pursued.

Children are anxious to acquire knowledge, and nothing can be more

congenial to their taste than association with those of their own age;

but we ought not to wonder that little children should dislike to go

to school, when, as in most of the dames' schools, forty or fifty,

or perhaps more, are assembled together in one room, scarcely large

enough for one-third of that number, and are not allowed to speak to,

or scarcely look at each other. In those places, I firmly believe,

many, for the want of proper exercise become cripples, or have their

health much injured, by being kept sitting so many hours; but as

children's health is of the greatest consequence, it becomes necessary

to remedy this evil by letting them have proper exercise, combined as

much as possible, with instruction; to accomplish which many measures

have been tried, but I have found the following to be the most

successful.

The children are desired to sit on their seats, with their feet out

straight, and to shut each hand; and then ordered to count a hundred,

or as many as may be thought proper, lifting up each hand every time

they count one, and bringing each hand down again on their knees

when they count another. The children have given this the name of

blacksmith, and when asked why they called it blacksmith, they

answered, because they hammered their knees with their fists, in the

same way as the blacksmith hammers his irons with a hammer. When they

have arrived at hundred (which they never fail to let you know by

giving an extra shout), they may be ordered to stand up, and bring

into action the joints of the knees and thighs. They are desired to

add up one hundred, two at a time, which they do by lifting up each

foot alternately, all the children counting at one time, saying, two,

four, six, eight, ten, twelve, and so on. By this means, every part of

the body is put in motion; and it likewise has this advantage that by

lifting up each foot every time, they keep good time, a thing very

necessary, as unless this was the case, all must be confusion. They

also add up three at a time, by the same method, thus, three, six,

nine, twelve, fifteen, eighteen, and so on; but care must be taken not

to keep them too long at one thing, or too long in one position, thus

exercising the elbow joints, by pushing them out and drawing them back

as far as possible.

Come here, my dear boy, look at baby's two hands,

And his two little feet upon which baby stands;

Two thumbs and eight fingers together make ten;

Five toes on each foot the same number again.

Two arms and two shoulders, two elbows, two wrists,

Now bind up your knuckles, make two little fists;

Two legs and two ancles, two knees, and two hips.

His fingers and toes have all nails on their tips.

With his hands and his feet he can run, jump, and crawl,

He can dance, walk, or caper, or play with his ball;

Take your hoop or your cart, and have a good race,

And that will soon give you a fine rosy face.

Oh! what would my boy do without his two hands;

And his two little feet upon which baby stands!

They're the gift of kind heaven for you to enjoy,

Then be thankful to heaven, my dear little boy.

Having done a lesson or two this way, they are desired to put their

arms out straight, and to say, one and one are two, two and one are

three, three and one are four, four and one are five, five and one are

six, six and two are eight; and in this way they go on until they are

desired to stop.

It should be observed, that all \_graceful\_ actions may be adopted. I

am sorry to find, from visits to various schools, that the movements

of the children have degenerated into buffoonery; they have been

allowed to put themselves into the most ridiculous postures, and have

thus raised objections which would not otherwise have been urged. As,

however, the whole Infant System is designed to make the \_children

think\_, I would urge the \_teachers\_ to guard against their being

automatons. Let them mark every impropriety with promptitude, and

correct it with judgment.

I have specified these methods not as being the only ones practicable,

or fit to be adopted, but merely, as hints to the judicious teacher,

who will doubtless think of many others, conducive to the same end:

and the more he can diversify them the better. It is the combination

of amusement with instruction, which, in my opinion, renders the

system so successful; and unimportant or improper even as it may

appear to some, is of more real service in the management of young

children, than all the methods of restraint and coercion, which have

been hitherto but too generally pursued.

The children may also learn the pence and multiplication tables, by

forming themselves into circles around a number of young trees, where

such are planted in the play-ground. For the sake of order, each class

should have its own particular tree; that when they are ordered to the

trees, every child may know which tree to go to; as soon as they are

assembled around the trees, they are to join hands and walk round,

every child saying the multiplication table, until they have finished

it; they then let go hands, and put them behind, and for variety's

sake, sing the pence table, the alphabet, hymns, &c. &c.; thus the

children are gradually improved and delighted, for they call it play,

and it is of little consequence what they call it, so long as they are

edified, exercised, and made happy.

This plan is calculated to impress the lessons on their memories, and

is adapted for fine weather, when they can go out to play, as it is

called. But as in wet or snowy weather, they cannot go out of the

school, we then have recourse to the mode previously mentioned.

Besides it is necessary that children should have exercise in winter

as well as in summer, in wet as well as in dry weather; for this

purpose we have several swings in the school-room, made of cord only,

on which the children are allowed to swing, two at a time. The time

that they are permitted to be on the swing, is according to what they

have to repeat. If it is the pence table, they say--

Twenty pence are one and eightpence,

That we can't afford to lose;

Thirty pence are two and sixpence,

That will buy a pair of shoes.

Forty pence are three and fourpence,

That is paid for certain fees;

Fifty pence are four and twopence,

That will buy five pounds of cheese.

Sixty pence will make, five shillings,

Which, we learn is just a crown;

Seventy pence are five and tenpence,

This is known throughout the town.

Eighty pence are six and eightpence,

I'll always try to think of that;

Ninety pence are seven and sixpence,

This will buy a beaver hat.

A hundred pence are eight and fourpence,

Which is taught in th' Infant School;

Eight pence more make just nine shillings,

So we end this pretty rule.[A]

[Footnote A: A covered play-ground is desirable where practicable.]

As soon as the table is thus gone through, the children who are on the

swings get off, and others supply their places, until, probably,

the pence table has been said twenty times; then we go on with the

multiplication table, until the children have repeated as far as six

times six are thirty-six; when the children on the swings get off and

are succeeded by two more on each swing; they then commence the other

part of the table, beginning at six times seven are forty-two, until

they have finished the table. During this time it should be borne

in mind, that all the children are learning, not only those on the

swings, but those who are sitting in the school; and it is surprising

to see with what alacrity the children will dispatch their other

lessons, when it is a wet day, in order to get to the swings. In

addition to the knowledge acquired by this method, it is admirably

calculated to try their courage. Many little boys and girls, who at

first are afraid to get on the swings, will soon swing standing on

one leg, and perform other feats with the greatest dexterity, at once

showing their increased courage and greater activity. We generally

let four or five children come to a swing, and those that can seat

themselves first, are entitled to the first turn, for they are never

lifted on. In the anxiety to get on the swing, some of them will

perhaps get out of temper, especially those who are not disciplined;

but when this is detected they are not allowed to swing that day,

which soon makes them good-natured to each other, and very cautious

not to get into a passion. Thus, in some degree, their bad tempers are

corrected, which is very desirable. It is a current remark, that bad

workmen find fault with the tools; and lazy teachers find fault with

the swings, because they must perpetually watch the children. We are

so tinctured with the old plan of \_rivetting\_ the children to \_seats\_,

that I despair of ever seeing the opposite plan become general in my

time. As soon as two children are seated on each swing, to preserve

order, the others retire (generally speaking) in the greatest good

humour to their seats.

Some will, I know, be apt to exclaim, surely this is encouraging and

fostering bad feelings--creating enmity and ill-will amongst the

children; but I say, No, it is teaching them to feel a spirit of

generous emulation, as distinguishable from that of ill-nature or

envy.

Beside the swings, in many schools they have a very useful addition to

the play-ground. I mean the gymnastic pole.

Although it is most proper for the master in the play-ground to relax

altogether the brow of magisterial severity, yet there is no occasion

for him to withdraw the influence of love. He will not prove a check

to the enjoyment of the children, if, entering into the spirit of

their innocent pastimes, he endeavours to heighten their pleasures by

a judicious direction of their sports.

Among other amusements, which his ingenuity may suggest, I would

mention a geometrical amusement, which is very practicable. First, let

a certain number of children stand in a row. Opposite to these let one

or more children be placed as directors to order the change of figure.

A straight line, we will suppose, is the first thing shown by the

position of the children; the next thing to be formed is a \_curve\_, by

the advancement of each end; then a half-circle,--a circle, by joining

hands in a ring;--two equal parallel lines, by the division of the

number in action; next a square,--triangle, &c. &c. These changes

may either be made at the command of the master, or, as we before

proposed, of one or more children acting as officers to direct these

geometrical movements.

Had it been constantly borne in memory that God is the creator of the

body of a child as well as of its mind; and that the healthy action of

both is requisite for happiness and usefulness, more attention would

have been paid to the due and proper exercise of children than has

hitherto been done. He has implanted an instinctive impulse to

activity in every young child, which displays itself in almost

incessant motion, where there is perfect health, and when there is

opportunity. To restrain this unnecessarily, is therefore to act in

opposition to the laws of nature; and the end must be a certain injury

to the child. To prevent this evil, and to act in obedience to these

laws, the various actions of clapping the hands, folding the arms,

twisting the fists, and various other motions have been introduced.

By these means a spirit of restlessness, which would undoubtedly show

itself under unnecessary restraints, is converted into a motive of

obedience, and thus even a moral influence is produced, by what

would appear a mere childish play. They may all be gone through with

elegance and propriety: and no rude or indelicate action should be

allowed. Many masters are too free in making a show of these exercises

to visitors, who are perhaps amused with them, but this is to divert

them from their proper use. They were only invented to be introduced

at intervals, when the children's attention began to flag, or to give

them that proper exercise which their tender age required. How has

everything connected with the infant system been burlesqued! and thus

sensible persons have been led to despise infant education, which

if rightly understood by them, would be seen to be one of the most

powerful moral engines that can be put into action for the welfare of

our fellow-creatures, especially of the poorer classes.

CHAPTER VIII.

MUSIC.

\_Infant ditties--Songs on natural history--Moral lessons in

verse--Influence of music in softening of the feelings--Illustrative

anecdote\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Music hath charms"

\* \* \* \* \*

Music has been found a most important means of \_mental\_ and \_moral\_

improvement. Its application took place from my finding a great

difficulty in teaching some children, especially the younger ones, to

sound their letters; and hence I determined to set the alphabet to a

simple tune. I sang it frequently to the children when they were low

or dispirited, and although none attempted the same sounds at first,

I had the satisfaction of observing unusual attention. My next effort

was very injudicious; for I urged on them the imitation of these

sounds before they were actually capable of so doing; and hence, as

more reflection would have shewn, only discordance arose. Having told

them then to listen \_only\_, as they did at first, I soon discovered

that having learned the tune through the proper organ--the ear, they

were able to imitate it with the voice. We then by the same means

marked the distinction between vowels and consonants with a tune that

was longer and rather more difficult. As the monitor always pointed

out the letters in succession while the children were singing,

attention was excited and secured, and error effectually prevented, as

correct time and tune could not be kept unless every child sung the

right letter.

Success as to the alphabet led to the adoption of music in the

teaching of arithmetic. This was available in two ways, first by

combining with it physical exercise, and then by tasking the faculties

of observation. The former was effected as follows: the children sang,

one is the half of two, two is the half of four, three is the half of

six, &c. &c., and then brought one hand down on the other alternately,

without however making too much noise, so as to interrupt the time;

the latter was accomplished by the arithmeticon, which has already

been explained. A few specimens of the ditties thus used shall now be

given; and several others, both hymns and moral songs are to be found

in the Manual, recently published by myself in conjunction with a

friend.

FOUR SEASONS FOR HUMAN LIFE.

Our days four seasons are at most,

And Infancy's the time of Spring;

Oh! with what trouble, care, and cost,

Must we be taught to pray and sing.

In Summer as our growth proceeds,

Good fruit should hang on every branch;

Our roots be clear'd from evil weeds,

As into knowledge we advance.

Our Autumn is the season, when

Temptations do our minds assail.

Our fruits are proved in manhood; then

Let not sin, death, and hell prevail.

For Winter brings old age and death,

If we've good fruits laid up in store;

Soon as we gasp our latest \_breath\_,

We land on a \_triumphant shore\_.

FOUR SEASONS OF THE YEAR.

On March the twenty-first is Spring,

When little birds begin to sing;

Begin to build and hatch their brood,

And carefully provide them food.

Summer's the twenty-first of June,

The cuckoo changes then his tune;

All nature smiles, the fields look gay,

The weather's fair to make the hay.

September, on the twenty-third,

When sportsmen mark at ev'ry bird,

Autumn comes in; the fields are shorn,

The fruits are ripe; so is the corn.

Winter's cold frosts and northern blasts,

The season is we mention last;

The date of which in \_truth\_ we must

Fix for December--twenty-first.

FIVE SENSES.

All human beings must (with birds and beasts)

To be complete, five senses have at least:

The sense of hearing to the ear's confined;

The eye, we know, for seeing is design'd;

The nose to smell an odour sweet or ill;

The tongue to taste what will the belly fill.

The sense of feeling is in every part

While life gives motion to a beating heart.

THE MASTER'S DAILY ADVICE TO HIS SCHOOL.

If you'd in wisdom's ways proceed,

You intellectual knowledge need.

Let science be your guiding star,

Or from its path you'll wander far.

'Tis science that directs the mind,

The path of happiness to find.

If \_goodness\_ added is to \_truth\_,

'Twill bring reward to every youth.

THE GOOD CHILDREN'S MONEY-BOX.

All pence by the generous deposited here,

When holidays come I will equally share.

Among all good children attending this school,

I should wish not to find a dunce or a fool.

Then listen, all you, who a prize hope to gain,

Attend to your books, and you'll not hope in vain.

THE MASTER.

THE COW.

Come, children, listen to me now,

And you shall hear about the cow;

You'll find her useful, live or dead,

Whether she's black, or white, or red.

When milk-maids milk her morn and night,

She gives them milk so fresh and white;

And this, we little children think,

Is very nice for us to drink.

The curdled milk they press and squeeze,

And so they make it into cheese;

The cream they skim and shake in churns,

And then it soon to butter turns.

And when she's dead, her flesh is good,

For \_beef\_ is our true English food;

But though 'twill make us brave and strong,

To eat too much we know is wrong.

Her skin, with lime and bark together,

The tanner tans, and makes it leather;

And without \_that\_ what should we do

For soles to every boot or shoe?

The shoemaker cuts it with his knife,

And bound the tops are by his wife,

And then he nails it to the last.

And after sews it tight and fast.

The hair that grows upon her back

Is taken, whether white or black,

And mix'd with mortar, short or long,

Which makes it very firm and strong.

The plast'rer spreads it with a tool,

And this you'll find is just the rule,

And when he's spread it tight and fast,

I'm sure it many years will last.

And last of all, if cut with care,

Her horns make combs to comb our hair;

And so we learn--thanks to our teachers,

That cows are good and useful creatures.

THE SHEEP.

Hark now to me, and silence keep,

And we will talk about the sheep;

For sheep are harmless, and we know

That on their backs the wool does grow.

The sheep are taken once a year,

And plunged in water clean and clear;

And there they swim, but never bite,

While men do wash them clean and white.

And then they take them, fat or lean,

Clip off the wool, both short and clean,

And this is call'd, we understand,

Shearing the sheep, throughout the land.

And then they take the wool so white,

And pack it up in bags quite tight;

And then they take those bags so full,

And sell to men that deal in wool.

The wool is wash'd and comb'd with hand,

Then it is spun with wheel and band;

And then with shuttle very soon,

Wove into cloth within the loom.

The cloth is first sent to be dyed;

Then it is wash'd, and press'd and dried;

The tailor then cuts out with care

The clothes that men and boys do wear.

THE HORSE.

Come, children, let us now discourse

About the pretty noble horse;

And then you soon will plainly see

How very useful he must be.

He draws the coach so fine and smart,

And likewise drags the loaded cart,

Along the road or up the hill,

Though then his task is harder still.

Upon his back men ride with ease,

He carries them just where they please;

And though it should be many a mile,

He gets there in a little while.

With saddle on his back they sit,

And manage him with reins and bit,

The whip and spur they use also,

When they would have him faster go.

And be the weather cold or hot,

As they may wish he'll walk or trot;

Or if to make more haste they need,

Will gallop with the greatest speed.

When dead his shining skin they use,

As leather for our boots and shoes;

Alive or dead, then, thus we see

How useful still the horse must be.

THE DOG.

The cow, the sheep, the horse, have long,

Been made the subject of our song;

But there are many creatures yet,

Whose merits we must not forget.

And first the dog, so good to guard

His master's cottage, house, or yard,--

Dishonest men away to keep,

And guard us safely while we sleep.

For if at midnight, still and dark,

Strange steps he hears, with angry bark,

He bids his master wake and see,

If thieves or honest folks they be.

At home, abroad, obedient still,

His only guide his master's will;

Before his steps, or by his side,

He runs or walks with joy and pride.

He runs to fetch the stick or ball,

Returns obedient to the call;

Content and pleased if he but gains

A single pat for all his pains.

But whilst his merits thus we praise,

Pleased with his character and ways,

This let us learn, as well we may,

To love our teachers and obey.

MORAL LESSON.[A]

[Footnote A: The following tale, though not adapted for the younger

children of an Infant School, and too long to be committed to memory

by the elder ones, might be read to such by the master, and would

serve as an admirable theme for conversation. It is likewise well

adapted as a tale for family circles.]

THE TWO HALVES.

"What nice plum-cakes," said JAMES to JOHN,

"Our mother sends! Is your's all gone?"

"It is," JOHN answered; "is not thine?"

"No, JOHN, I've saved one half of mine;

"It was so large, as well as nice,

I thought that it should serve for twice,

Had I eat all to-day, to-morrow

I might have mourn'd such haste in sorrow;

So half my cake I wisely took,

And, seated in my favourite nook,

Enjoyed alone, the \_double pleasure\_,

Of present and of future treasure."

"I, too," said JOHN, "made up my mind

This morning, when our mother kind

Sent down the cakes so nice and sweet,

That I but half to-day would eat,

And half I ate; the other half--"

JAMES stopp'd his brother with a laugh;

"I know what you're about to say,--

The other half you gave away.

Now, brother, pray explain to me,

The charms which you in \_giving\_ see.

Shew me how \_feasting\_ foes or friends

Can for your \_fasting\_ make amends."

"A poor old man," said JOHN, "came by,

Whose looks implored for charity.

His eyes, bedimm'd with starting tears,

His body bowed by length of years,

His feeble limbs, his hoary hairs,

Were to my heart as silent prayers.

I saw, too, he was hungry, though

His lips had not informed me so.

To this poor creature, JAMES, I gave

The half which I had meant to save.

The lingering tears, with sudden start,

Ran down the furrows of his cheek,

I knew he thank'd me in his heart,

Although he strove in vain to speak.

The joy that from such acts we gain

I'll try for your sake to explain.

First, God is pleased, who, as you know,

Marks every action that we do;

That God 'from whom all blessings flow,'

So many JAMES to me and you.

\_Our mother\_, next, had she but seen

Her gifts of kindness so employ'd,

Would \_she\_ not JAMES, well pleased have been;

And all my feelings then enjoy'd?

\_The poor old man\_, was \_he\_ not pleased?

Must not his load of sorrow be,

Though but for one short moment, eased,

To think, 'Then some one feels for me.'

But still you ask, of all this pleasure,

How much will to \_the giver\_ fall?

The whole, rich, undiminish'd treasure,--

\_He\_ feels, \_he\_ shares the joy of \_all\_.

We eat the cake, and it is gone;

What have we left to think upon?

Who's pleased by what we then have done?

How many pray, JAMES, more than one?

The joys by sympathy supplied

Are many, great, and dignified.

But do not on my word rely,

Whilst you, dear JAMES, the fact may try;

And if you do not find it true,

I'll next time eat \_both halves\_ with you!"

\* \* \* \* \*

It is desirable that the master should add instrumental to vocal

music. He should be able to play on the violin, flute, or clarionet,

but, as he must speak much, the former is to be preferred. Such is the

influence of the weather, that children are almost always dull on dull

days, and then a little music is of great advantage. On wet days, when

they cannot go into the play-ground, it assists them in keeping the

step when they march, it cheers and animates their spirits, and, in

some measure, compensates for their privations. It will also aid

various evolutions.

Music may be employed, moreover, to soften the feelings, curb the

passions, and improve the temper, and it is strange that it should not

have been employed till the operation of the Infant System, to which

it is absolutely indispensable. When, for instance, after a trial by

jury, as explained in a former page, the children have been disposed

to harshness and severity, a soft and plaintive melody has produced

a different decision. To recite one case; when I was organizing the

Dry-gate School in Glasgow[A], a little girl in the gallery had lost

of her ear-rings (which, by the way, like beads, is a very improper

appendage, and ought by all means to be discouraged), and on

discovering the fact, commenced a most piteous lamentation. I made

inquiry for it immediately, while the children were seated in the

gallery, but in vain; and I subsequently found it in the hands of a

little girl at the bottom, who was attentively examining it, and who

gave it me the moment it was demanded. On asking the children what was

to be done in this case, they said she should have a pat of the hand.

I then showed, that had she intended to steal it, she would have

secreted it, which she did not, and that her attention was so absorbed

by it, that she had not heard my inquiry; but one little boy was not

satisfied; he said, "She kenned right weel it was nae her ain;" but

after singing a simple and touching air, I was pleased to find his

opinion changed. "Perhaps, sir," he said, "ye may as weel forgie her

this ance, as she is but a wee thing."

[Footnote A: This school has since become a very important Normal

school, from which many others have emanated, the head master

being the one I originally instructed: Mr. Stowe, also, one of the

directors, has applied the principles of the Infant School System to

the instruction of older children, which is called Stowe's Training

System; being applied to juveniles, with great success. I know of no

school, except the Dublin Normal Schools, equal to those, and of no

masters superior to those I have seen who have been taught there.]

The music chosen for children should be easy and simple, fluent and

varied. Hymn tunes should be of a rather lively character, as the more

dull and sombrous are not well adapted to the infant ear. Airs for

the tables or exercising songs are required to be very cheerful and

inspiring, and then they tend to excite pleasure and liveliness, which

should often be aimed at in an infant school.

As children take much interest in singing, and readily learn verses by

heart, so as to sing them, although not properly instructed in their

meaning or rightly understanding them, singing has been considered by

many persons the "soul of the system." This is a grievous error as

regards the intellectual advancement of the children, and still worse

as regards their health and that of the teacher. I have at times

entered schools as a visitor when the mistress has immediately made

the children show off by singing in succession a dozen pieces, as if

they were a musical box. Thus to sing without bounds is a very likely

way to bring the mistress to an early grave, and injure the lungs of

the dear little children. Use as not abusing is the proper rule,

tar all the new modes of teaching and amusing children that I have

introduced; but it has often appeared to me that abuse it as much as

possible was the rule acted upon. Call upon the first singers of the

day to sing in this manner, and where would they soon be?

CHAPTER XIX.

GRAMMAR.

\_Method of instruction--Grammatical rhymes\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"A few months ago, Mr. ---- gave his little daughter, H----, a child

of five years old, her first lesson in English Grammar; but no

alarming book of grammar was produced on the occasion, nor did the

father put on an unpropitious gravity of countenance. He explained

to the smiling child the nature of a verb, a pronoun, and a

substantive."--\_Edgeworth\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

It has been well observed, "that grammar is the first thing taught,

and the last learnt." Now, though it is not my purpose to pretend that

I can so far simplify grammar, as to make all its rules comprehensible

to children so young as those found in infant schools, I do think

that enough may be imparted to them to render the matter more

comprehensible, than it is usually found to be in after years.

The great mystery of grammar results, in my opinion, from not making

the children acquainted with the things of which the words used are

the signs, and moreover, from the use of a number of hard words,

which the children repeat without understanding. For instance, in the

classification of words, or the parts of speech, as they are called,

\_nouns, substantives\_, and \_adjectives\_, convey, as terms, no idea to

the minds of children; and, in spite of the definitions by which their

import is explained, remain to them as unintelligible as the language

of magical incantation. That the children can easily comprehend the

difference between words which express the names of things, and

those which express their qualities, and between words which express

actions, and those which express the nature of those actions, is

undeniable; and this is just what should be taught in an infant

school. In the first place, let the children be accustomed to repeat

the names of things, not of any certain number of things set down on a

lesson card, or in a book, but of any thing, and every thing, in the

school-room, play-ground, &c.: next let them be exercised in telling

something relating to those things--\_their qualities\_; as for

instance, the school-room is \_large, clean\_, &c.,--the children

are \_quiet, good, attentive\_, &c.--the pictures are \_pretty\_: the

play-ground is \_pleasant\_, &c. Having accustomed the children, in this

manner, first to give you the \_names\_ of things, and then to observe

and repeat something respecting them--you have gained two ends; you

have, first, taught the children to be observant and discriminative;

and, secondly, you have taught them to distinguish two distinct

classes of words, or \_names\_ and \_qualities\_; and you may now, if

you please, give them terms by which to distinguish these respective

classes, viz. \_substantives\_ and \_adjectives\_. They will no longer be

mysterious words, "signifying nothing," but recognized signs, by which

the children will understand and express definite ideas. The next

thing you have to teach them is, the distinction betwixt singular and

plural, and, if you think proper, masculine and feminine; but before

you talk to the children about \_plural number\_ and \_masculine gender\_,

&c., let them be made acquainted with the realities of which these

hard-sounding words are the signs.

Having made the classification of words clear and comprehensible, you

next proceed to the second grand class of words, the verbs, and their

adjuncts, the \_adverbs\_. With these you will proceed as with the

former; let action be distinguished by words;--the children \_walk,

play, read, eat, run\_; master \_laughs, frowns, speaks, sings\_; and

so on; letting the children find their own examples; then comes the

demand from the master for words expressing the manner of action. How

do the children \_walk?--slowly, quickly, orderly\_. How do they \_read,

eat run!\_ How does the master \_laugh, speak, sing?\_ The children now

find you ADVERBS, and it will be quite time enough to give them terms

for the classification they thus intuitively make, when they have a

clear idea of what they are doing. When this end is attained, your

children have some ideas of grammar, and those clear ones. There is no

occasion to stop here. Proceed, but slowly, and in the same method.

The tenses of the verbs, and the subdivision into active, passive, and

neuter, will require the greatest care and attention which the

teacher can use, to simplify them sufficiently for the children's

comprehension; as it will likewise enable them to understand the

nature and office of the other classes of words. As, however, it is

not my intention to write a grammar here, but merely to throw out a

few hints on the subject, I shall leave the further development of

the plan to the ingenuity of those who may think fit to adopt its

principles, as above laid down.

English Grammar doth us teach,

That it hath nine parts of speech;--

Article, adjective, and noun,

Verb, conjunction, and pronoun,

With preposition, and adverb,

And interjection, as I've heard.

The letters are just twenty-six,

These form all words when rightly mix'd.

The vowels are a, e, o, i,

With u, and sometimes w and y.

Without the little vowels' aid,

No word or syllable is made;

But consonants the rest we call,

And so of these we've mention'd all.

Three little words we often see,

Are articles,--\_a, an\_, and \_the\_.

A noun's the name of any thing--

As \_school\_, or \_garden, hoop,\_ or \_swing\_.

Adjectives tell the kind of noun--

As \_great, small, pretty, white,\_ or \_brown\_.

Instead of nouns the pronouns stand,

John's head, \_his\_ face, \_my\_ arm, \_your\_ hand.

Verbs tell of something being done--

To \_read, write, count, sing, jump\_, or \_run\_.

How things are done the adverbs tell--

As \_slowly, quickly, ill\_, or \_well\_.

Conjunctions join the nouns together--

As men \_and\_ children, wind \_or\_ weather.

A preposition stands before

A noun, as \_in\_ or \_through\_ a door.

The interjection shows surprise--

As, \_oh!\_ how pretty, \_ah!\_ how wise.

The whole are called nine parts of speech,

Which, reading, writing, speaking teach.

THE ARTICLES.

Three little words we hear and see

In frequent use, \_a, an\_, and \_the\_;

These words so useful, though so small,

Are those which articles we call.

The first two, \_a\_ and \_an\_, we use

When speaking of one thing alone;

For instance, we might wish to say

An \_oak\_, a \_man\_, a \_dog\_, a \_bone\_.

\_The\_ speaks of either one or more,--

The cow, the cows, the pig, the pigs,

The plum, the plums (you like a score),

The pear, the pears, the fig, the figs.

An oak, a man; means \_any\_ oak,

Or \_any\_ man of all mankind;

A dog, a bone, means \_any\_ dog,

Or \_any\_ bone a dog may find.

This article we only use

Whenever it may be our wish

To speak of some determined thing,

As thus;--\_the\_ bird, \_the\_ ox, \_the\_ fish.

By which we mean not \_any\_ bird,

That flying in the air may be,

Or \_any\_ ox amongst the herd,

Or \_any\_ fish in stream or sea.

But some one certain bird or ox,

Or fish (let it be which it may)

Of which we're speaking, or of which

We something mean to write or say.

Remember these things when you see

The little words, a, an, and the.

These words so useful, though so small

Are those which articles we call.

Nothing can be more absurd than to compel young children to commit

to memory mere abstract rules expressed in difficult and technical

language. Such requires a painful effort of the mind, and one

calculated to give a disgust against learning. \_Grammar was formed on

language and not language by grammar\_, and from this it necessarily

follows, that children should acquire a considerable store of words

from a knowledge of reading and of things, before their minds are

taxed by abstract rules. To be thoroughly understood they require

words to be compared with words, and one word to be compared with

another; and how can this be done without the memory being amply

supplied with them previously. Such simple instruction as this chapter

directs may easily be given; but to attempt much more would be like

endeavouring to build an elegant and ornamental structure before you

had collected materials to build with.

CHAPTER XX.

THE ELLIPTICAL PLAN OF TEACHING.

\_Method Explained--Its success\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"He tried each art."--\_Goldsmith\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

All persons acquainted with children are aware of the torpor of some

minds, and of the occasional apathy of others, and to this it is

necessary to provide some counteraction. This is done effectually by

what is called the elliptical plan, according to which, words are

omitted in a narrative or poem repeated by the teacher, for the

purpose of being supplied by the children.

These exercises are very agreeable to the children, and by them some

features of the mental character become conspicuous. Children are

usually sensible of their need of instruction, but if they can make

it appear that any of their statements are original, their delight is

especially manifest. There seems, too, a dislike at first, to take any

trouble to arrive at the truth; careless children will therefore guess

several times; but an observant teacher will at once perceive that

there is no effort of the understanding, point it out to the child,

and thus prevent its recurrence.

Dr. Gilchrist observes, in a letter sent to me, "You have now the

whole method before you, and I shall boldly stake all my hard-earned

fame, as a practical orientalist, on the salutary consequences that

will spring from the adoption of short elliptical tales at your

interesting institution."

My usual practice with respect to the elliptical method of teaching,

is, to deliver some appropriate, simple, extemporaneous tale, leaving

out but few words at first, and those such as must obviously strike

the children; as they get used to the plan, I make the omissions more

frequent, and of words less obvious. The following specimens will

render the whole plain to the understandings of my readers.

A gardener's youngest[a] ---- was walking among the

fruit[b] ---- of his father's[c] ----, he saw a little[d]

---- fly up and sit on one of the[e]---- of the trees;

the[f] ---- lifted a stone, and was going to[g]---- it at

the poor[h]---- which seemed to[i]---- most sweetly

thus:

My[k] ---- is[l] ---- of moss and hair,

The[m] ---- are[n]---- and sheltered there;

When[o]---- soon shall my young[p] ---- fly

Far from the[q]---- school[r]---- eye."

The[s]---- eldest[t]---- who understood the[u]----

of birds came up at that moment, and[v]----

out, throw down the[w] ----, you hard-hearted[x] ----

and don't[y] ---- the innocent[z] ---- in the middle of his

song; are you not[aa]---- with his swelling red-breast,

his beautiful sharp eye, and above all with the[bb] ---- of

his notes, and the familiar[cc] ---- he assumes, even in

the[dd] ---- of a[ee]---- like you? Ask your youngest[ff]

---- here if she remembers the[gg]---- which her good[hh]

---- read to her yesterday of a very[ii]---- boy, who

was very[kk]---- to a harmless green[ll] ---- which

he caught[mm] ---- for hunger, among the[nn]---- in the[oo]

---- of winter.

[Footnote a: Son]

[Footnote b: trees]

[Footnote c: garden]

[Footnote d: bird]

[Footnote e: branches]

[Footnote f: boy]

[Footnote g: throw]

[Footnote h: bird]

[Footnote i: sing]

[Footnote k: nest]

[Footnote l: built]

[Footnote m: eggs]

[Footnote n: laid]

[Footnote o: hatched]

[Footnote p: ones]

[Footnote q: roaming]

[Footnote r: boy's]

[Footnote s: gardener's]

[Footnote t: son]

[Footnote u: notes]

[Footnote v: called]

[Footnote w: stone]

[Footnote x: rogue or boy]

[Footnote y: disturb or hurt]

[Footnote z: bird]

[Footnote aa: pleased or delighted]

[Footnote bb: sweetness or melody]

[Footnote cc: air]

[Footnote dd: presence]

[Footnote ee: naughty boy]

[Footnote ff: sister]

[Footnote gg: story]

[Footnote hh: mother, aunt &c.]

[Footnote ii: naughty or good]

[Footnote kk: cruel or kind]

[Footnote ll: finch or linnet]

[Footnote mm: perishing or dying]

[Footnote nn: snow]

[Footnote oo: depth or middle.]

The following little verses upon the same principle have been found

to answer extremely well, by putting one child in the rostrum, and

desiring him purposely to leave out those words that are marked, the

other children will fill them up as he goes.

I must pray

Both ---- and day.

Before ---- eat

I must entreat,

That ---- would bless

To me ---- meat.

I must not play

On God's own day,

But I must hear

His word with fear.

It is a sin

To steal a pin

Much more to steal

A greater thing.

I must work,

And I must pray,

That God will feed

Me day by day.

All honest labour,

God will bless;

Let me not live

In idleness.

I will not be

Or rude or wild,

I must not be

A naughty child.

I will not speak

Of others ill,

But ever bear

To all good-will.

I'd rather die

Than tell a lie,

Lest I be lost

Eternally.

I'll ---- my bread

From ---- to door,

Rather ---- steal

My neighbour's store.

I must not kill

A little fly;

It is an act

Of cruelty.

I must not lie,

I must not feign,

I must not take

God's name in vain.

Nor may my tongue

Say what is wrong;

I will not sin

A world to win,

In my Bible

I am to read,

And trust in God

In all my need.

For Christ alone

My soul can save,

And raise my body

From the grave.

Oh! blessed Saviour,

Take my heart

And let not me

From thee depart.

Lord, grant that I

In faith may die,

And live with thee

Above the sky.

CREATION.

God made the ---- that looks so blue,

God made the ---- so green,

God made the ---- that smell so sweet,

In ---- colours seen.

God made the ---- that shines so bright,

And gladdens all I see;

It comes to give us ---- and light,

How ---- should we be!

God made the ---- bird to fly,

How ---- has she sung;

And though she ---- so very high,

She won't ---- her young.

God made the ---- to give nice milk,

The horse for ---- to use;

I'll treat them ---- for his sake,

Nor dare his gifts abuse.

God made the ---- for my drink,

God made the ---- to swim,

God made the ---- to bear nice fruit,

Which does my ---- so nicely suit;

O how should I ---- him!

"O Lord, how manifest are thy works; in wisdom hast thou made them

all!"--Psalm civ. 24.

\* \* \* \* \*

I subjoin, as an exercise for teachers themselves, the following hymn,

as one calculated to induce reflections on the scenes of nature, and

direct the mind to that Being who is the Source of all excellence!

1

Hast ---- beheld ---- glorious

Through all ---- skies his circuit run,

At rising morn, ---- closing day,

And when he beam'd his noontide

2

Say, didst ---- e'er attentive

The evening cloud, ---- morning dew?

Or, after ----, the watery bow

Rise in the ---- a beauteous ----?

3

When darkness had o'erspread the ----

Hast thou e'er seen the ---- arise,

And with a mild and placid ----

Shed lustre o'er the face of night?

4

Hast ---- e'er wander'd o'er the plain,

And view'd the fields and waving ----,

The flowery mead, ---- leafy grove,

Where all ---- harmony ---- love.

5

Hast thou e'er trod the sandy ----

And ---- the restless ---- roar,

When roused by some tremendous ----

It's billows rose ---- dreadful form?

Hast thou beheld the ---- stream

Thro' nights dark gloom, ---- sudden gleam,

While the bellowing thunder's ----

Roll'd rattling ---- the heaven's profound?

7

Hast thou e'er ---- the cutting gale,

The sleeting shower, ---- the biting hail;

Beheld ---- snow o'erspread the

The water bound ---- icy chains?

8

Hast thou the various beings ----

That sport ---- the valley green,

That ---- warble on the spray,

Or wanton in the sunny ----?

9

That shoot along ---- briny deep,

Or ---- ground their dwellings keep;

That thro' the ---- forest range,

Or frightful wilds ---- deserts strange?

10

Hast ---- the wondrous scenes survey'd

That all around thee ---- display'd?

And hast ---- never raised thine

To Him ---- bade these scenes arise?

11

'Twas GOD who form'd the concave ----

And all the glorious orbs ---- high;

---- gave the various beings birth,

That people all the spacious ----.

12

'Tis ---- that bids the tempests

And rolls the ---- thro' ---- skies:

His voice the elements ----

Thro' all the ---- extends His sway.

13

His goodness ---- His creatures share,

But MAN is HIS peculiar ----.

Then, while they all proclaim ---- praise,

Let ---- his ---- the loudest ----.

The elliptical plan has been found to be most successful, and has been

applied with equal success in schools for older children, and also

children of another grade. Messrs. Chambers, I believe, are the only

persons, as far as I know, who have the honesty to acknowledge the

source from whence this plan was taken.

CHAPTER XXI.

REMARKS ON SCHOOLS.

\_National schools--British and foreign societies--Sunday

schools--Observations\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Is it then fitting that one soul should pine

For want of culture in this favour'd land?

That spirits of capacity divine

Perish, like seeds upon the desert sand?

That needful knowledge, in this age of light,

Should not by birth be every Briton's right?"

\_Southey\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

Although it has been the special design of the present work to speak

of the first efforts of \_art\_ in assisting the proper development of

the mental and moral faculties, I shall take the liberty of indulging

in a few remarks on the methods at present adopted in the more

advanced stages of education, as seen in our National and Sunday

Schools. I need, I am sure, offer no other apology for so doing,

than the fact that it is in these institutions the infant poor

must complete their education; it is in these schools, the budding

faculties must either ripen or perish; and the moral principles become

confirmed or weakened. Certain I am, that it is the wish of all

concerned in these praiseworthy institutions \_to do their best\_ for

the attainment of this object--the welfare and improvement of the

rising generation of the poor classes; and therefore I the less

reluctantly offer a few thoughts on the subject, which it is my humble

opinion may not be altogether useless.

With regard to National Schools, I must say, there is too much form,

and too little of the spirit of instruction to be found in their

management: the minor faculties are attended to in preference to the

higher ones; it is the memory alone which is called into action; the

understanding is suffered to lie in a state of torpid inactivity.

Their lessons, their plan of using them, and their discipline

altogether, are of that monotonous nature, that the children always

seem to me to be dosing over them. I know it will be pleaded that the

number to be taught at once, renders this defect unavoidable; that it

is impossible to teach a large body of children, in such a way as to

secure the attention and activity of the whole. And it is so far true,

as to its being impossible to detect and reform every idle pupil,

who finds an opportunity of indulging his idleness in the divided

attention of his teacher; but I do think, if it be impossible to cure

the evil, it may be in a great degree prevented. Make your system

interesting, lively, and inspiriting, and your scholars will neither

be able nor willing to slumber over it. Every one knows what an effect

is produced on the physical faculties by a succession of the same

sound; for instance, by the long continued chiming of a single bell;

it induces a drowsiness which we find it impossible to resist, except

by turning our attention to another thing; but let a number of bells

strike out into a merry peal, how quickly we are aroused, how lively

we become, whilst their various \_changes\_ secure the attention and

interest which their pleasing and spirited tones first excited. And

just so it is with the mind in the matters of education; you must give

a variety of tones, a newness of aspect to your lessons, or you will

never be able to keep up a lively attention in your scholars. For

this purpose I would particularly recommend to the attention of all

concerned, the chapters in this volume on geometry, conversation,

pictures, and likewise that on the elliptical method. By adopting the

plan recommended in these chapters, the children will have something

to do, and to do that something they must be \_active\_. The first

object of the teacher is to excite a thirst for knowledge; not to pour

unwelcome information into the mind.

It will probably be said, that however well adapted the plan

recommended may be for the infantine scholars for whom it was

designed, yet, it does not follow that it may be equally advantageous

for those of a more advanced age; and if by this it is meant, that the

very same lessons, &c., are not equally applicable in both cases,

I perfectly agree with the truth of the objection; but it is the

\_principle\_ of education that I recommend, and would affirm to be as

applicable to children of the most advanced age, as to those of the

youngest. And I may further add that unless this is done, these

schools will not be in a proper state to receive our children, so

as to carry on the cultivation of all the faculties, instead of the

memory only. It is not sufficient to store the memory, we must give

employment to the understanding. It is not sufficient to talk to the

children of piety and of goodness; we must present them with a living

example of both, and secure, as far as possible, an imitation of such

example.

As applicable to Sunday Schools, I would particularly recommend the

use of picture lessons on scripture subjects, for the use of the

junior classes, to be used as a sort of text for conversation, suited

to the state of their mental faculties. I am convinced that the

knowledge acquired by this method is likely to make a deeper and more

lasting impression, than that imparted in a less interesting mode.

Nor should the lessons on natural history be neglected, in my humble

opinion, in the system of Sunday School instruction; inasmuch as the

more the children know of the wonders of creation, the greater must be

their reverence of the Almighty Creator; in addition to which it will

enable the teachers to supply variety, a thing so agreeable, and,

indeed, indispensable, in the instruction of children. For these

reasons, I think it could not justly be considered as either a

misemployment or profanation of the Sabbath-day. For the elder

children, moreover, it would be advisable to have occasional class

lectures, simplified for the purpose, on astronomy, natural history,

&c.; and although it might be unadvisable to occupy the hours of the

Sabbath-day with the delivery of them, they might be given, on some

week-day evening, and should be made the medium of reward to good

behaviour; such children as had misbehaved themselves being proscribed

from attending. When thus seen in the light of a privilege, they

would not fail to be interesting to the little auditors, as well as

conducive to good behaviour.

Sunday Schools should not be too large, nor should children remain

in them too long. I have observed some instances, when this has been

neglected, of choices being made, and connections formed, which must

be often very prejudicial.

It is with some degree of reluctance and apprehension, I touch upon

another topic--that of religious doctrine. As schools for gratuitous

instruction have been established by most of the religious sects

extant, it is obvious that some dissimilarity of sentiment on

religions subjects must exist, as imparted in such schools. Let it not

be supposed, that I would cast a censure on any religious body, for

establishing a school devoted to such a blessed purpose. On the

contrary, I rejoice to see, that however various their theories may

be, their opinion of Christian practice, as evinced in such actions,

is the same. But one thing I would say, to each and to all, let a

prominence be given to those fundamental truths of love and goodness

which Christianity inculcates. Let the first sounds of religion which

salute the ears of infancy, be that heavenly proclamation which

astonished and enraptured the ears of the wakeful shepherds, "Peace

on earth and good-will towards men." It was the herald-cry by which

salvation was ushered into the world, and surely no other can be so

proper for introducing it into the minds of children. I must candidly

own, that I have occasionally witnessed a greater desire to teach

particular doctrines, than the simple and beautiful truths which

form the spirit of religion; and it is against this practice I have

presumed to raise a dissentient voice.

The conductors of schools, in connexion with the British and Foreign

School Society, have generally spoken more highly of the Infant

System than others, and this is certainly to be attributed to

more congeniality, since in them the mental powers are more fully

exercised, and there is a greater variety in the instruction given.

The only objection I can discover to them, is one that lies equally

against the National Schools--I mean the opportunities afforded for

monitorial oppression; but this may be obviated in both cases by the

judgment and vigilance of the teachers. It should be added, that

schools of both kinds demand occasional inspection from those

intimately acquainted with the systems avowedly adopted, as they

appear very different in different places. I will only mention further

on this topic, that many schools are too large. No Infant School, I

conceive, should exceed 200, nor should a National or British and

Foreign School exceed 400, when under the care of one master.

One half of these numbers would be much better than the whole, and

tend greatly to the success of the schools; but funds are so difficult

to raise, from the apathy shown by persons in general to the

instruction of the poor, and therefore the schools are so few in

number, that it is absolutely requisite to place as great a number of

children as possible under one master, that expense may be saved. When

will this sad state of things be changed, and the country at large see

that the noblest object it can ever attempt is, to rear up its whole

population to intelligence, virtue, and piety?

In conclusion, I would observe, that as the foregoing remarks have

been kindly made, in such a manner, it is my hope, they will all be

received.

It is most gratifying to me to be able to add, that since the above

remarks were written, great improvements have been made in National

Schools, a large portion of the public attention has been lately drawn

to the subject, and it is almost universally admitted that the present

system is capable of considerable improvement. This must be gratifying

to those persons who have borne the heat and burthen of the day. The

National Society are taking measures to improve their systems, and

also by forming Diocesan Societies to establish Normal schools for the

instruction of teachers on improved principles throughout the country.

I would to God the Church of England had done this long ago; she would

have had fewer enemies, and could now have put on a bolder front.

I trust in God that even now it is not too late, and that

circumstances may transpire to render her efforts in this sacred cause

doubly effective. She has lately made a noble stand in defence of

principle; this will have its proper effect; but she must not stop

there, for the enemy is in the field; and though he is quiet for a

time, the many-headed dragon is not crushed. The utmost vigilance

will be necessary to counteract the wiliness of the serpent; real

improvements in education must be adopted; the books used in her

schools must be revised and improved; a larger amount of knowledge

must be given to the poorer portion of her sons, and then a beneficial

reaction will not be far distant. She has done much, but she has much

more to do. If she does not pre-occupy the ground, there are others

that will. Dependence upon the Divine Will, sound discretion, and

Christian principle, must be her guide; goodness must be her fortress,

and truth her finger post, and then I for one perceive that she will

not fail, for the bulk of her people are still favourable to her, and

will rise up in her defence, when their assistance is required; and

if I mistake not the signs of the times, there will be work for the

thinking portion of the laity soon cut out, work which I fear the

clergy cannot, or will not do, but which, nevertheless, must be done.

God grant that it may be done well, whoever may be the instruments.

CHAPTER XXII.

HINTS ON NURSERY EDUCATION.

\_Introduction to botany--First lessons in natural history--First

truths of astronomy--Geographical instruction--Conclusion\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"'Tis on his mother's bosom the babe learns his first lessons; from

her smile he catches the glow of affection; and by her frown, or

her gentle sighs he persuaded to give up what his ignorance or

selfishness prompt him with pertinacity to retain. Happy where this

sweet, this powerful influence is well directed,--where the mother's

judgment guides her affectionate feelings."--\_Taylor\_

\* \* \* \* \*

Many persons, eminent by their charitable acts, and who express

themselves generally desirous of aiding in any plan which may

contribute to the improvement and happiness of the poorer classes,

have, nevertheless, been unwilling to assist in the establishment of

Infant Schools, fearful that the superior method pursued in these

schools should render the children educated therein, much better

informed than the children of the richer classes, who might thus

be supplanted in numerous lucrative and honourable situations in

after-life.

From this circumstance one of the two following conclusions must be

drawn; either that the system of education pursued in the higher

schools is very faulty and imperfect, or that the fears of those

persons are entire groundless.

If the first be true, then it cannot be denied that the consequences

feared by the richer classes must necessarily take place, if, either

from prejudice or apathy, they continue the same faulty and imperfect

method of education, which, by the expression of these fears, they

positively declare is usually pursued in the higher schools; but the

remedy is easy. Let the same good principles of tuition be introduced

into nurseries, and into those schools to which the children of

the rich are sent, and the latter will not fail to maintain their

patrimonial ranks in society. They need then have no fear least the

poorer classes should become too intellectual, but, on the contrary,

they will soon find that their own welfare, security, and happiness

will not only be insured, but will increase in proportion as the

poorer classes gain knowledge; for by the method of instruction

pursued in the \_Infant Schools\_, the knowledge there acquired is

necessarily accompanied by the practice of industry, sobriety,

honesty, benevolence, and mutual kindness; in fine, by all the moral

and religious virtues.

That the system of instruction recommended in the foregoing pages is

equally applicable to the children of the rich as to those of the

poor, there can be no doubt; and it might be adopted either in schools

established on its principles or in the nursery. It is, indeed,

obvious that it might be carried to a much greater extent, where the

means of so doing would not be wanting. Many things might be taught,

which it is neither advisable nor practicable to teach in the schools

established for the instruction of poor children.

Whilst the elements of number, form, and language, may be taught by

the means and after the manner recommended in the preceding chapters

on the respective subjects, there are other branches of knowledge

which might enter into the scope of nursery instruction with great

advantage to the children.

As an introduction to \_botany\_, I would make the children acquainted

with the progress of vegetation, \_not from words, but from

observation\_. I would have three or four garden-pots filled with

mould, introduced into the nursery at a proper season of the year; the

children should be asked, what is in the pots.--"Dirt," or "mould,"

will of course be the reply. They should then be shewn the seeds which

are to be deposited in the mould, and assuming in the eyes of the

children a prophetic character, the mother or governess should inform

them of the process of vegetation, and that about a certain time a

pretty flower will make its appearance in the pots: the seeds should

then be deposited in the mould, and the pots placed in a proper

situation. It would not be improper to let the children themselves sow

the seed; thus convincing them of their power of being useful, and

becoming the instrument of so great a wonder, as the transformation of

a seed into a flower. During the time the seed is lying unperceived

beneath the mould, the children should frequently be sent to look "if

the pretty flower has come up," or questioned as to what they

were told concerning it. At length the green shoot will make its

appearance, just peeping above the mould, to the no small surprise and

gratification of the little observers. They will mark with attentive

eagerness the progress of its growth, the appearance of the bud, and

the gradual development of "the pretty flower," till they are fully

convinced of the wisdom of the parent or teacher who foretold

all which has happened, and made acquainted with the process of

vegetation, not from words, but from observation. Certain it is, that

such a lesson could not be wholly useless. In the first place it might

be made the means of impressing them with ideas of the Almighty

power, highly conducive to piety; secondly, it would beget a habit of

observation; thirdly, it would be likely to produce a love of flowers

and the vegetable world, favourable to their future pursuits in the

science of botany; and, lastly, it would inspire their little breasts

with a love and respect for the parents or teachers who were wise and

kind enough to teach them so many true and wonderful things.

As an efficient and amusing introduction to \_natural history\_, I would

have every nursery provided with a microscope, by means of which the

minds of the children might be excited to wonder and admiration at the

amazing beauty and perfection of the insect world, and the astonishing

construction of various substances, as seen through this instrument.

So far would this be from begetting habits of cruelty, that it would

be very likely to check them. Many children who would be loath to

torture a large animal, such as a cat, a dog, or a bird, feel no

compunction at ill-using a fly, because it appears to them so

insignificant an animal; but had they once witnessed, by means of a

microscope, the wonderful and perfect conformation of the insect, I am

persuaded they would be less inclined to make the distinction.

Various devices might be made use of to teach the first truths of

\_astronomy\_. So simple a device as an apple, with a wire run through

its centre, turned round before a candle, might serve to explain the

phenomena of day and night; whilst the orrery, with the accompaniment

of a simple and familiar lecture--(it should be much more so, indeed,

than any I have heard or read)--would make them acquainted with those

stupendous facts which strike us with as astonishment and awe. It

has been well observed by Dr. Young, with respect to the wonders of

astronomy--

"In little things we search out God--in great

He seizes us."

One thing I would here notice--that it should be a constant practice

to remind the children, that in the apple and the orrery, they see

only a resemblance to the earth and the heavenly bodies, that \_they\_

are vast in size and distance, beyond their comprehension; at the same

time leading them to an actual observation of the heavens by means

of a telescope. This would be a high treat to the children, and

productive of correct notions, which are but too apt to be lost where

we are under the necessity of teaching by signs so infinitely unlike,

in size and nature, as the candle and the apple, and the brass balls

and wires of the orrery, to the earth and the heavenly orbs.

For giving the children their first lessons in \_geography\_, I would

have a floor-cloth in every nursery, painted like a map, but of course

not filled up so perfectly as maps for adults necessarily are. It

should contain a correct delineation of the position of a certain

space of the globe, we will say, for instance, of England; let the

children then be told to proceed from a certain spot, to go through

certain counties, towns, &c., and to fetch a piece of cloth from

Yorkshire, or a knife from Sheffield, cheese from Cheshire, butter

from Dorset, or lace from Huntingdonshire, &c., &c. The lessons thus

given would be at once amusing and instructive both to the governess

and children. If preferred, these maps might be painted of a less

size, to cover a table. No difficulty would be found to get a set of

such table-covers or floor-cloths painted, if the public would once

encourage the plan.

There are now large skeleton maps published, which have merely the

principal cities, towns, and rivers, &c., marked down, so as not to

present too many objects to confuse the young eye. There are also

picture maps in which the chief productions of a country, both

vegetable and animal, are delineated in their proper places. These

would form a great aid in nursery instruction, and also for an infant

school. Let the great truth be ever borne in mind, that what is seen

by the eye is more quickly understood and more certainly remembered,

than what is merely described or made known in words.

I would also have an oblong tray made to hold water, large enough to

cover a table. In this I would fasten pieces of cork, cut out in the

shape of land, according to the best maps, while other small bits of

cork should represent the mountains and hills on the surface of the

respective islands. By application to the toy-makers, a sufficient

number of animals might be got to stock the respective islands, &c.,

with their appropriate inhabitants; whilst the manufactures, and many

of the natural products of the different places, might be readily

supplied by the ingenuity of the parent or governess. A little boat

should then be provided, and a voyage to a given part undertaken;

various islands might be touched at, and various commodities taken

on board or exchanged, according to the mercantile instructions the

children should receive; whilst brief accounts might at first be

read or given of the climate, productions, and inhabitants of the

respective places, till the little scholar should be able to conduct

the voyage, purchase or exchange commodities, and give an account of

the various countries and their inhabitants, &c., by himself. Certain

I am that more might be acquired, by this toothed, of geographical

knowledge, in one week, than by the old method in a twelvemonth: and

what the children did learn they would always remember. I might extend

these suggestions to the size of a small volume, had I space to do so;

but the limits of the present one forbid; at a future period, should

my active employments permit, I may resume the subject of \_nursery

hints\_ in an extended and separate form.

There are, indeed, many excellent works already published on the

subject; but as by the suggestions and contributions of many, every

plan is likely to be perfected, no one is justified in withholding any

thing likely to promote the desired object.

A due improvement of these advantages will make the progress of the

higher classes more than commensurate with that of the lower. It is

obvious, that the former have resources which cannot be obtained by

the latter. They have the means, too, of availing themselves of all

improvements in education, of engaging the most intelligent and

efficient instructors, and of frequently changing the scene for

their children, and consequently the objects which come under their

observation. Which, I ask, is the more honourable course,--to object,

as some do, to the education of the infant poor, lest they should

learn too much, or to improve, then, the opportunities they have, by

which they and their children they surpass all others?

A few words ought to be added on discipline at home. It is not

uncommon to hear parents, in all classes of society say, "That child

is too much for me. I cannot manage him at all." We should think him a

most unpatriotic Englishman who should say the French are too strong

for us, we cannot beat them; but very far more absurd and truly

unparental it is to confess that a mere child is master of its

parents. A grown person and an infant, what a contrast! True it is,

that many a child has become very unmanageable, but this may always be

traced to early neglect. If from the earliest infancy the young mind

is trained to little acts of obedience, they will soon become habitual

and pleasant to perform; but if improper indulgence and foolish

kindness be practised towards children, they must, of course, grow

up peevish, fretful, and ill-tempered, obstinate, saucy, and

unmanageable. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap." Let this

truth be ever engraved upon the minds of all parents. A constant

exercise of parental love in allowing all that is fit and proper, and

a firm and judicious use of parental authority, in strictly refusing

and forbidding all that is unsuitable or wrong, should harmoniously

unite their power in training up the young. Punishments, as a last

resource, ought to be used; but never in a spirit of anger, wrath, or

revenge. If administered calmly and mildly they will have a double

power. Every wilful offence of a child seems to say, "Correct me, but

with judgment." It may be painful to a parent to put on the "graver

countenance of love," but \_true parental love\_ will always do it. Oh

that all parents in every rank of life saw and acted upon the great

truth, that the noblest object that they can present to themselves,

and the greatest obligation that is laid upon them, is to rear up

their children to intelligence, virtue, and piety; to make them good

rather than great, for if they are the former, they will assuredly be

the latter in its highest and truest sense.[A]

[Footnote A: Should the reader be pleased with this volume, I may

refer to another work of mine just published, entitled "A System for

the Education of the Young."]

\* \* \* \* \*

Having now finished all that I have to say on Infant Schools, I would,

in conclusion, breathe forth a sincere petition to the throne of

Divine Truth and Goodness, for the prosperity and spread of the

System; in which I am sure I shall be joined by all who have been

convinced of its beneficial effects in promoting the present and

everlasting welfare of human beings.

Mysterious are thy ways, O God; yet who was ever disappointed that

asked of thee in a right spirit? Prosper, then, thy work which

is begun in the world, we beseech thee, O Lord; may thy gracious

providence so encircle and protect the rising generation, that there

may be no more complaining in our streets. Protect them, O Lord, from

the many dangers that surround them, as soon as they draw their breath

in this vale of tears, and put into the hearts of those who have the

means to consider the state of the infant poor, to give them the

assistance they need. Grant that thy blessed example may be followed

by many, for thou didst desire that children should come unto thee,

and not be forbidden, and thou didst take them up in thine arms and

bless them, declaring, that of such is the kingdom of heaven. May thy

creatures, therefore, not be ashamed to notice little children, but

co-operate, hand and heart with each other, and endeavour to teach

them all good. May difference of sentiment and opinion be laid aside

and forgotten; and may all join hand and heart in endeavouring to

rescue the infant race from danger; and so these tender plants may be

nurtured with the dew of thy divine blessing, and be thus made fit

subjects for thy heavenly kingdom, where the wicked cease from

troubling, and the weary are at rest. May thy divine influence descend

abundantly upon all those who have hitherto turned their attention to

infant children; may they feel great pleasure in doing good; may they

receive thy grace and protection abundantly; and when their days of

probation are ended, may they find a place in thy heavenly mansions,

and there glorify thee throughout the boundless ages of eternity.

Amen.[A]

[Footnote A: This prayer written more than thirty years ago. The

reader will see a great portion of the prayer has been answered; the

subject has been mooted in Parliament; the Government have mooted

the question of Education; and even the sovereign has recommended

attention to it in a speech from the throne. This feeling only wants a

right direction given to it, and all will be well.]

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