

AMERICAN TEACHER.

WITH SUPPLEMENT.

{ Old Series, Vol. XI., No. 5. }
{ New Series, Vol. V., No. 5. }

BOSTON, JAN., 1888.

{ Monthly: \$1.00 a Year. }
{ NEW ENGLAND PUBLISHING CO. }
3 SOMERSET ST., BOSTON.

APPLETONS' STANDARD GEOGRAPHIES.

Based on the Principles of the Science of Education, and giving Special Prominence to the

INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND PRACTICAL FEATURES.

The most successful Geographical Text-Books published.

—* THE SERIES. *

APPLETONS' ELEMENTARY GEOGRAPHY.

*This book treats the subject objectively, makes knowledge precede definitions, and presents facts in their logical connections, taking gradual steps from the known to the unknown. The work is designed to be **elementary**, not only in name and size, but also in the style and quality of its matter and development of the subject.*

The illustrations have been selected with great care, and the maps are distinct, unencumbered with names, accurate, and attractive.

Introductory price, 55 cents.

APPLETONS' HIGHER GEOGRAPHY.

This volume is not a repetition of the Elementary, either in its matter or mode of developing the subject. In it the earth is viewed as a whole, and the great facts of political as depending on the physical geography are fully explained. Great prominence is given to commerce and leading industries as the result of physical conditions. The maps challenge comparison in point of correctness, distinctness, and artistic finish. Special State editions, with large, beautiful maps, and descriptive matter, supplied without additional expense.

Introductory price, \$1.25.

Specimen copies, for examination, will be sent, post-paid, to teachers and school-officers on receipt of the introductory price.

Liberal terms made to schools for introduction and exchange.

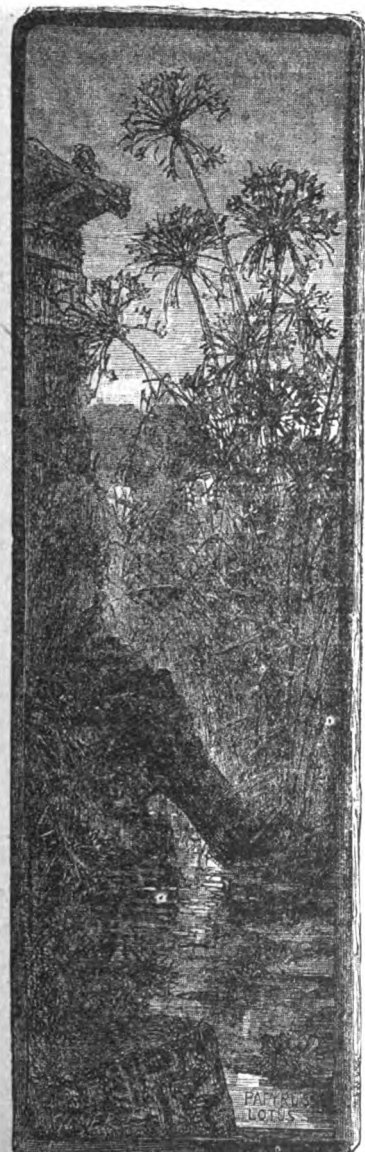
Teachers should send for our new DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE and "Educational Notes," mailed free on application.

D. APPLETON & CO., PUBLISHERS,

BOSTON,
ATLANTA,

➤ New York. ◀

CHICAGO,
SAN FRANCISCO.



"APPLETONS' STANDARD HIGHER GEOGRAPHY."

AMERICAN TEACHER.

VOL. XI.

Devoted to the Methods and Principles of Teaching.

No. 5.

THE TEACHER'S TASK.

BY CHARLES MOREAU HARGER.

YET who the teacher's place would fill should know its duties vast,
Should count them o'er as a novice's beads are through her fingers passed,
And earnest prayer on every one thy seeking soul should cast.

It is to mold ill-shapen forms to beauty's image fair,
To part the flakes of gold from dross that dazzles with its glare;
To snatch from out a mass of earth thought's diamonds rich and rare.

To fashion well the crude young lives that o'er life's threshold pour,
To curb and guide the restless limbs that ne'er were curbed before,
To sift the strains of Knowledge's hymn from out the world's dull roar.

To help the struggling soul along its pathway toward the sun,
To rightly paint the glittering prize for which life's race is run,
To light the lamp which shall endure until the goal is won.

To watch for rays of thought that may with future brightness shine,
To furnish each truth-seeking heart with Wisdom's countersign,
To turn the current of men's thoughts toward Science's holy shrine.

To catch far off the gleam which tells of perfect manhood's dawn,
To strive that lines of truth shall be o'er fickle fancy drawn,
To add the mind's uplifting power to muscle's sturdy brawn.

To feel in all its mighty weight the greatness of the trust,
To realize the feeble strength that lies in human dust,
To lift against a burden that seems oftentimes unjust.

To meekly serve when critics cry that labor is in vain,
To sweep with patience 'gainst the waves that roll from off the main,
To weep o'er efforts lost and then take up the toil again.

To aim with care, and see thy shaft fall wide from off the mark,
To hear rough feet tramp rudely out thy scarcely lighted spark,
To watch the eddying waters gulf thy fondly builded bark.

To sow fair seed and never see the dappled harvest wave,
To give, and have no thankful heart o'er bless the hand that gave,
To long and sigh for honor's crown and find naught but a grave.

But then at least when thou shalt have the earthly record weighed,
And know that better lives were lived by reason of your aid,
To rest in peace and joy because so well your part you played.

—•••—
All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

— The Builders.

THE CULTIVATION IN YOUNG CHILDREN, OF A TASTE FOR THE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC.

BY MRS. JULIA MCNAIR WRIGHT.

THIS taste is not only to be cultivated in children, but is even to be created.

Most children are in a state of mental equipoise and receptivity, and do not so much seek intellectual food as accept what is given to them, or absorb what is left in their way.

There are exceptional children, who have subjective instincts so strongly marked that no unfavorable influences are able to divert or destroy them. Thus, we can conceive of no surroundings which would have made Agassiz other than a naturalist.

But the case with most children is, that we must decide what taste is desirable for them, and then cultivate it in them.

In this work of cultivation there are three almost equal co-laborers,—the parent, the teacher, and the librarian.

Let us assume that the parent is convinced that a love for literature and natural science will develop the child in much which is worthiest in mind, morals, emotions, physique, and will crowd out of the mind and render odious the vulgar, brutal, and vicious. What shall be the method of cultivating the desired taste?

The attention of the child should be constantly called to the subjects in question, and in an attractive way they should be almost hourly presented in order to make them a habit of thought. The flower and its parts, the process of its growth, the bud as the flower-babe asleep, the leaf, the blade, the corn in the ear; the insect with its wonderful wings, its horny case, its clustered eyes; the fly that wheels over the table; the fish with its gleaming scales, its shape fit for gliding in water; the bird, its structure, its nest, its habits; the ant hill and the bee hive and their inhabitants, these should be constantly but gently, almost insensibly, pressed upon the attention of the child. Even the manufactured object, the silk ribbon with its cochineal dye, the paper weight, the rubber eraser, may be made a gate into the wide domain of nature. Can any fashion of magnifying glass be obtained, let the looking through such glass be the choice treat and reward, reserved for high occasions, not too infrequent.

It is the parent's instant duty to give reading matter to that "reading animal," his child. It is a crime against

the forming mind of the child to present to it coarse and hideous trash, either in picture or reading.

If only a ten-cent book can be bought, that book should be good of its kind. We may not be able to get high art for ten cents, neither should we invest the ten cents in comic valentine horrors.

The songs that are sung, the stories that are told, the verses that are repeated to the little ones, should be harmonious; they should have a harmony of word, thought, subject, method, so that they fill the infant mind with a certain divine rhythm, set silver bells ringing in heart and brain, and wed the notion of the good to the conception of the beautiful.

The parent should also encourage the child in the collection of books, and of natural curiosities. The child, from infancy, should be taught to respect books and handle and keep them orderly as peculiar treasures; to purchase books as it has opportunity; to make scrap-books of pictures, poetry, stories, and whatever product of print is worthy of preservation in this way.

Many short-sighted mothers, zealous for neatness, denominate the multitudinous seaside and wayside curiosities which children gather "litter" and "untidiness" and "trash," and quickly cart these collections out, often to the lasting injury of the child.

We commend to these parents the consideration that such collections, grown to a little private museum in the house, will be far more sightly and hopeful than the future pipe, ale bottle, or pack of cards, and it is an imperious demand of nature that children, that all people claim, own, and gather some belongings for themselves.

It is not necessary that the geological collection shall be scattered on the parlor carpet, the "bugs" laid out on the baking-table, or the shells find refuge in mother's work-basket. Indeed a first lesson as to cabinets will be that specimens have a legitimate place and should be ranged and cared for. But every child has a right to a place,—if it be only a corner that can be spared,—for such treasures; and the wise woman, who is "building her home," not a mere brick and mortar house, but that living house,—her children, will provide shelves, or closet, or boxes, the very best that she can, and teach her children pride in, and care for, their specimens.

If she can only procure a handkerchief-box, asked for at a dry goods store when she is shopping, or a raisin-box with a pane of glass over it, she will secure these and make it plain to the child that specimens free from dust, with unmutilated wings and the proper complement of legs and antennæ, insects carefully caught and painlessly killed, are essential to a useful collection. So the wise parent will help the child to dry flowers and mount beetles, and, with observant care, will point out new wonders and beauties.

But it happens that the well-intentioned parent may be ignorant, both of what to do and how to do it, and may have no idea of what books are to be had on the desired subjects.

Here the teacher, fresh from college or the normal, the convention, the institute, the schoolroom, has an errand to the parent as well as to the child. The teacher should diligently suggest to the parent what taste should be cultivated and what methods it is well to take, and what are the means to the end.

But the teacher has a direct mission to the child in this matter. Taste for certain studies is more often roused in the schoolroom than brought to the schoolroom.

A beautiful thought, a melodious verse, a pretty turn to an idea, can be so pointed out by the teacher that the child's intellectual eye awakes and becomes observant to seek out and delight in such beauties of thought and diction.

By the judicious teacher the study of natural science can be so yoked to amusement, rest, and exercise, that the pupil shall scarcely know where one began or the other ended.

A teacher in a country school, when she saw sleep stealing into child-eyes, attention lagging, little mouths yawning like those of young robins, or drowsy heads bowed too low over slates and copy-book, was wont to say, "Here Anne, take your slate and pencil and go draw for me that thistle by the door." "Go, George, and for ten minutes watch that ant hill in the path, and then tell me what you see." "Go, and carefully examine that mullein in the fence-corner, and then describe it to us." It is needless to call attention to the carefulness of observation, niceness of comparison, and acuteness of deduction, and the descriptive powers brought into activity by such a course as this. Will George be likely, hereafter, ruthlessly to trample on the marvelous art city at whose gates he watched?

A corner of the schoolroom reserved, with shelves for birds' nests, wasps' nests, snail shells, and the many wonders that an observant child may find; a box with a glass lid, through which can be watched the metamorphose of some splendid beetle or butterfly; little collections brought from mountain or beach and marked with the small donor's name,—these are the things which shall make the schoolroom as the home called beautiful to the memory and a present palace of delight to the child; and men and women of pure thought and refined taste shall rise up to call the teacher who presided there, blessed. The teacher should secure simple, attractive books on subjects in natural history, and the reading of them should be made a pleasure and reward to the pupils.

The teacher thus zealous in mind cultivating finds an invaluable coadjutor in a well-informed librarian.

A conscientious librarian will have a certain acquaintance with the books in the library, their subject-matter, authors, and literary excellences. This will especially be the case in regard to new books; the librarian examining reviews, notices, magazines, publishers' lists and announcements as they appear, will be ahead with the current literature on various topics. Thus in command of the field

the librarian has a mission of suggestion to both parents and teachers and children, and here a conscientious librarian can become a potent educator and benefactor of a community. Very especially is this the case where children or very young persons come to the library to select their own books. They may select an amazing amount of useless or hurtful books merely because they have heard these mentioned or praised by other young persons or because they know of nothing else likely to please them.

A gentleman seeing a girl of ten often at a library, found she drew out and read many books of a generally useless character.

He said to her, "Why do you not read histories or travels, or something about natural history? You can find on these subjects easy, attractive books."

She replied: "I did not know there were such books except for grown folks."

He presented the child's case to the librarian, asking that her reading be helpfully directed, for a time, and requested the child to take, in succession, Abbott's *Mary Stuart*, *Queen Elizabeth*, *Marie Antoinette*, and *Josephine*. These, if not the highest style of historic reading, were as high as the child could then easily comprehend, were well printed, admirably illustrated, graphic, and entertaining.

The librarian reported that the child was delighted with her new field of reading, and under guidance of the librarian she read not only histories, but travels; some of the highest types of juvenile books by our best authors, and was fascinated and led into a new world by *Arabella Buckley's Life and Her Children*, *Fairy Tales of Science*, and other works on natural history.

If parents, teachers, and librarians heartily unite in creating and cultivating elevated, helpful tastes in the young we shall enter on an age of intellectual giants. But giants are a race nurtured neither on chaff nor sweetmeats.

A HAPPY MORNING.

BY M. E. C.

MISS M. was especially happy in being the recipient of a box of beautiful flowers very often, and we, being fortunate enough to be present upon the arrival of one, so enjoyed the exercises based upon the lovely gift that we cannot refrain from sharing our experience with others.

During the opening exercises the flowers disposed upon a stand in the middle of the ring were made the subject of the morning talk, which developed many facts concerning the parts of plants, their functions, and how we should care for them.

When seats had been taken about the tables both classes were supplied with a tray of blossoms; everything in readiness, a basket containing colored worsted balls was

produced, and presently Miss M. presented a red one, inviting any one who wished to find a flower of the same color to raise the hand. Soon a volunteer stepped forth, and selecting a carnation placed it beside the ball; but not feeling just satisfied with his attempt replaced the pink and chose a geranium, whose color corresponded perfectly with that of the ball.

In this way volunteers were led to match colors until every child had taken his turn and been decorated upon the breast with the flower of his choice. Very gay and happy did the little band look, as all entered thoroughly into the spirit of "the flower-party," seeming to appreciate completely Miss M.'s generosity in sharing her gift.

Later in the morning, as the regular occupation time, the older children were supplied with white, rough-surface papers and paints. Upon the former was a row of faintly outlined oblongs (that form being the one under special development for the day) to be "painted in," each child using the color corresponding to that of the flower he wore.

The class of younger children was provided with papers, like those used by the older children in size and quality, but stamped with two rows of circles, which were to be filled in by pasting over them circular bits of paper having the same color of the flower worn by individual workers. The circular papers were already prepared with a mucilaginous coating, that the little people had simply to moisten with a tiny paint-brush, dipped in water, before laying and pressing them upon the white papers.

More industrious, happier-faced children it hasn't been our good fortune to see for a great while, and the genuine joy with which each small worker received permission to carry home the result of a morning's industry was delightful to witness.

THE HOME IN THE SCHOOL.

BY WINTHROP.

IT may be a question whether it is wise on the part of the parent to encourage children to retail at home and before others all the details of school life. Without question, children should never do or say anything they should be unwilling to relate to their parents, but when they are urged or permitted to repeat conversations between other scholars in the school, or remarks made by the teacher, the danger is that exaggeration, that besetting sin of all children, will dominate in the narrative and there will be given a discolored and distorted recital which may, if sympathy be expressed on the parents' part, result in rendering the children rebellious, hypercritical, and resentful of all correction on the teacher's part. It would be well if all children were given to understand that no criticisms of their teachers were allowed but those strictly reflecting on themselves and made personal by their own misconduct, or, if the children so conceive, given by the teacher in an uncalled for and ungenerous spirit.