

**THE TEACHING OF
GEOGRAPHY IN
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649155057

The teaching of geography in elementary schools by R. L. Archer & W. J. Lewis & A. E. Chapman

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R. L. ARCHER & W. J. LEWIS & A. E. CHAPMAN

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PREFACE

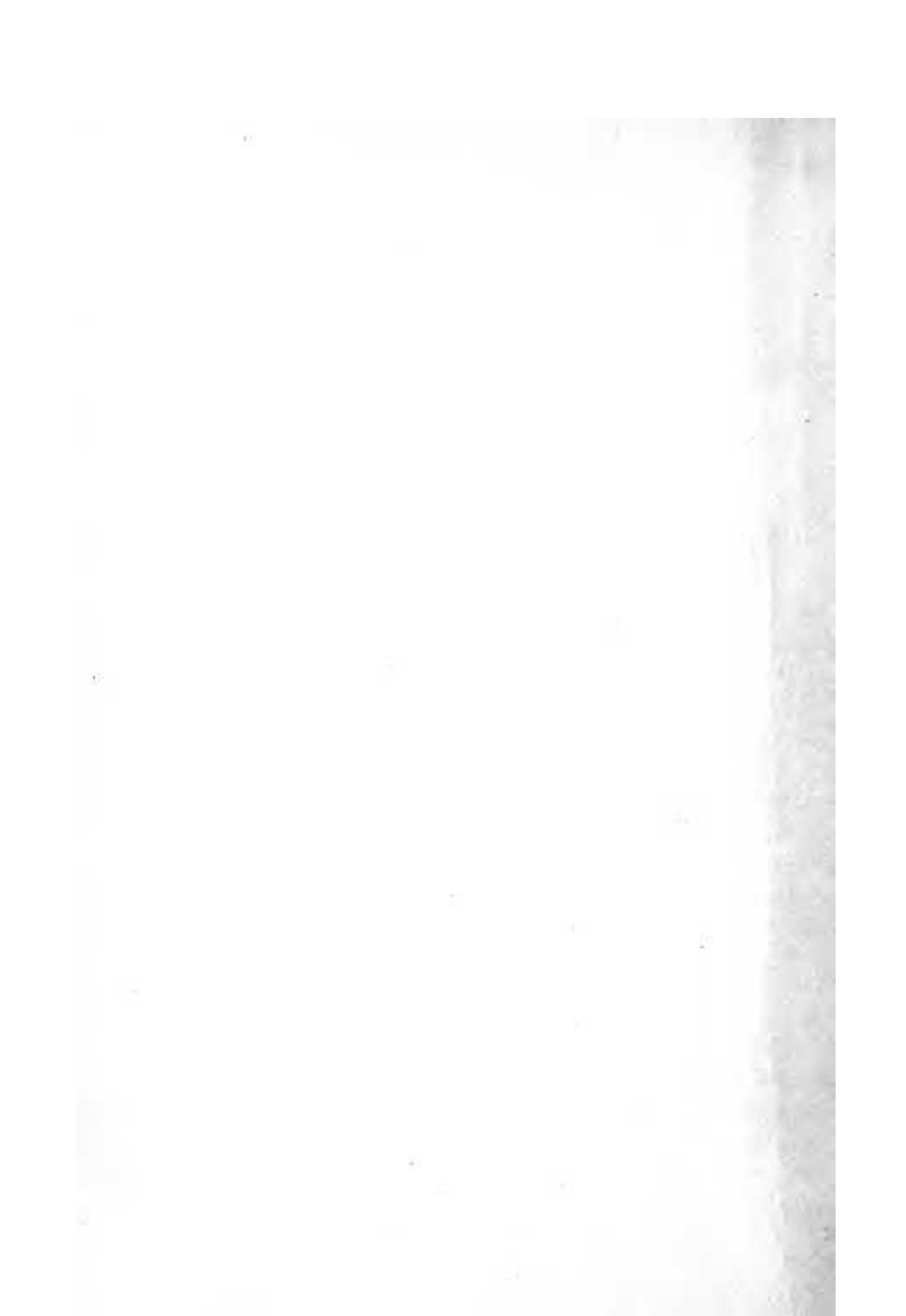
THIS little book is an attempt to apply the newer conceptions of Geography to teaching in elementary schools. It in no way aims at being original in its treatment of the subject itself: for these we are indebted to the body of geographers who have during the last few years revolutionized the conception of the subject, in particular to Mr. H. J. Mackinder and Dr. A. J. Herbertson, to whose works frequent reference is made in the following pages. We felt, however, that in regard to the teaching of Geography in elementary schools, the central idea for which they are struggling—that Geography is, above all things, the examination of the effect of natural agencies on human affairs—is not yet sufficiently recognized and acted upon, and our aim is to throw out some suggestions as to changes in the teaching which we believe would help the better realization of this idea. In the case of branches of the subject which have only recently come into prominence, we have given some outline of the subject-matter to serve as an introduction of them to readers to whom they may be unfamiliar, and have added information as to sources from which information may be obtained.

In the Index the pages where subjects are treated most fully have been printed in black type.



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THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY
IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

I

THE AIM IN TEACHING GEOGRAPHY

1. THE first question which is naturally asked in connection with any subject claiming a place in the curriculum of a school is, What is our object in teaching it? In the case of a subject of obvious practical utility, or with a long-established tradition as to its subject-matter and methods, the asking and answering of this question is often regarded as a mere matter of form, or a conventional opening for a handbook of method. In the case of Geography, on the contrary, the answer makes a fundamental difference to our whole method of teaching the subject. It will determine what we teach and what we exclude; it will fix our order and our method; it will decide what is essential and what is detail.

Teachers are rapidly becoming discontented with the traditional manner of teaching Geography as a mass of facts, statistics, and names. In fact, while this was the only known method, good teachers usually despised a subject which appeared to be nothing more than a tax on the memory of their pupils. There is consequently