

NATURE STUDY.

NOTE.—The following article has been prepared for the NATURALIST by Mr. S. E. Percival, a student at the Ottawa Normal School. It is a straightforward statement of what he himself saw, and as such will commend itself to every naturalist and reader of this magazine.—J. W. G.

A WEASEL'S HOME.

Not long ago the opportunity was afforded me of discovering some very interesting facts concerning the life habits of our rather doubtful friend, the weasel. For the benefit of those who are not already well acquainted with this crafty little animal I shall narrate a few incidents as they were brought to my notice.

On one occasion as we were removing the sheaves from a large mow at a threshing bee, near the village of Burrit's Rapids, we were struck by the frequent appearance of a weasel at widely different points about the barn. The little creature seemed greatly distressed and agitated. The men regarded it with a certain amount of interest and amusement, wondering what in their work was causing the little animal so much of apparent worry and excitement. In a very short time, however, the problem was solved. About half way down in the mow the men opened up some peculiar but luxurious apartments which had evidently been the home of the uneasy weasel. The home was lined throughout with the soft fur of mice. The floor had an extra thick covering and in the centre, evidently to take the place of the modern rug, was neatly spread the skin of our pet kitten which had mysteriously disappeared some days before. This room appeared to be the main living room and was about the size of an ordinary water pail.

From this room a winding passage led into another room which presented a rather ghastly appearance, being strewn with the bodies of dead mice, bones, fur, etc. From this commissariat apartment, as well as from the living room, passages and cross passages extended in all directions horizontally forming quite a perfect system of highways.

The following incidents came under the notice of a friend of mine who reported to me all the details as he saw them:

One day while returning from the fields through a lane he heard, before him, a most distressed and dismal squealing. Approaching cautiously he observed two adult weasels each leading by force one of their incorrigible offspring, while two others came quietly along in the rear. There was evidently some cause for a sudden change of quarters. He was unable to watch them long enough to determine their destination, but knowing as we