

NOTES ON GERMAN SCHOOLS.

(From Hon. Geo. W. Ross, L. L. D., Minister of Education, Ontario.)

In the *Elementary* schools of Germany, great attention is paid to elementary science in the form of observation lessons. From two to four recitations a week, of nearly an hour each, during the entire course are given to lessons upon plants, animals, minerals, physics, or chemistry. In some schools the observation of plants, animals and minerals does not begin until the third and fourth years; or, if these objects are observed, it is only in a general way. The following outline shows what is attempted in some schools during the *first three years* of the course:—

First year.—Naming and describing objects in the immediate neighborhood; writing clear, simple sentences in connection with observation; and, showing the relation of children to parents, to household, to school and to church.

Second year.—Conversations upon familiar plants, animals and minerals, concerning their uses, etc.; in the same manner, the various articles in common use and their manufacture; instruction regarding the treatment of animals and care of plants.

Third year.—Continuation of animal, plant, and mineral lessons; home geography. In the schools working under this and other plans of study, for the first three years there are observed and talked about, in addition to the common plants, animals and minerals such familiar objects as the stove, the egg, the house, the schoolroom, the bed clothing, food, the garden, the field.

In other schools and with more advanced pupils, a more elaborate study is attempted as follows:

1. *The plant considered by itself.*

(a) Description, root, stem, leaves, blossoms, fruit, location and time of blossoming.

(b) Its life, first appearance, growth, length of life—annual or perennial.

2. *The plant as a part of nature.*

(a) Relations to soil, moisture, climate; opposing influences.