

the great world of Nature about them. It is becoming more and more apparent that the observing faculties of children are not being trained to see the common things of Nature, which meet them at every turn, nor to learn how the plants and animals live, or how these influence them as part of their environment.

It is a note-worthy fact that the most practical of people, our cousins to the south of us, are the most pronounced advocates of a curriculum which includes Nature Study. They feel that the power to acquire dollars and cents is not the only power which a man should possess; they feel convinced that man cannot live by bread alone, but that there is a great interesting world of Nature concerning which the young should not be ignorant. It is true that the beauties of the woodland, meadow, and stream are often hidden from most people, who see nothing interesting in them simply because their eyes have not been opened in youth to the wonderful things that surround them. The so-called hidden forces of Nature are being utilized to-day as they have never before, so that from a utilitarian standpoint, a knowledge of the working of these forces is being looked upon as a necessary part of the educational equipment of the young man on leaving school.

The objects of Nature Study.—The primary object of Nature Study is "to cultivate the child's power of observation, and to put him in sympathy with out-door life." It is unnecessary for me to state the importance of the cultivation of the power of observation. The successful business and professional men of to-day are those who were more observant than their fellows, and who trained themselves to draw proper conclusions from what they saw. In this age of intense competition in all walks of life, when margins are so small, and where the profits depend upon the amount of attention that is given to the small

matters, the successful man will be, other things being equal, he who is the most observant. Now it is claimed that the common objects of Nature furnish the best and most available means of cultivating the observational powers. Nature, as observed in the woods, the orchard, garden, fields, waysides, brooks, and marshes, is the proper subject to study; and when simple studies of the operations of the laws of Nature are undertaken the child becomes an original investigator.

Introduction into our Schools.—The most serious drawback to the enthusiastic introduction of Nature Study into our Schools in Ontario, is the lack of a supply of teachers trained in Nature Study methods, and naturally much diffidence, even indifference, will be shown by many teachers at the outset. Gradually, however, as time goes on, this objection will be removed, for our three Normal Schools are now giving considerable attention to this matter. Yet the fact remains that ninety per cent. of our Public School teachers are not prepared for the work. What then could be done to help them?

- 1st. The establishment of a summer school where instruction in the fundamentals of Nature Study would be given. The teacher would then secure the practical acquaintance with insects, plants, birds, soils and farm crops which is absolutely essential, if he purposes to teach Nature Study in his school. The summer school would very naturally be located at the O. A. C., which already possesses the necessary laboratory and museum facilities.
- 2nd. By sending out trained teachers to the rural sections. At Cornell, only the most progressive teachers (chiefly from the cities) took advantage of the summer school, and the teachers from the rural sections, for which the school was primarily aimed to help, failed to put in an appearance. The authorities decided then to send help to the rural sections in the form of trained teachers, who not only conducted Nature Classes in the