

Timely Questions.

1. What is the change in the length of days?
2. Do we have a larger or smaller amount of sunshine? How does the sunshine differ from that of December and January? (Warmer and longer in afternoon).
3. At what time of the day do we have the most intense cold?
4. What is the effect of the warming sunshine upon the ground? Upon the snow? What becomes of water resulting from the thaws? What are the good effects of the February thaws?
5. What is the general appearance of the February sky? What is the colour of the clouds?
6. Are the air conditions the same as they were in the earlier months of winter? What is the effect of the quieter air upon the snowstorms?
7. Do the trees show any signs of life?
8. What can you notice upon the bushes and shrubs?
9. What do you find upon the ground? What caused the twigs to break and fall?
10. What birds do you see in the woods?
11. Can you find any seed or seed vessels yet remaining?
12. What signs of plant life do you see? Where do mosses grow?
13. What signs of animal life are to be found in the woods? Of bird life? (Footprints).
14. Name the three most common birds.
15. What do the squirrels and rabbits find to eat? (Buds and tender bark).
16. What change is coming over the willow tree? Can you discover any traces of the catkins?
17. Where is the bluejay commonly found? In the late afternoons? Where do we hear him in the early mornings? Where does the bluejay build his nest? What shape of tree is his favourite nesting place? What are the materials used in the bluejay's nest? Where is it placed? What is the number of the eggs?
18. What is the winter food of the crow? Of the snowbird?—*Selected.*

The Doctor—You are talking about useless noises. Give us a few true facts. What is a useless noise?

The Professor—Well, in the phrase, "true facts," for instance, "true" is a useless noise.

Better Rural Schools

It is true that the backbone of the nation lies in the rural districts, and for that reason the people who dwell there ought to have every advantage that looks to the upbuilding of character and intellect. Of course at the bottom of development lie the schools. C. I. Hudson, in discussing this subject in New York recently, said: "Back of every question that has to do with better farming, better homes and better lives, is the question of better rural schools. If we are to have better farming, we must begin with the boys and grow them. There is no other way. The problem that is now before our people is how to bring the best school to the boy or girl right where they are, on the farm, and to so revise its curriculum that valuable time shall not be wasted in teaching studies in which the average country boy has no interest and which he will never make good use of."

"There is need that even the elementary textbooks shall be revised, shortened and simplified so that more time can be given to elementary agriculture, nature studies and practical demonstrations in these subjects that will fit him for country life and make him see the value of this life rightly lived and to love it. It seems almost incredible that the farmers are asking for this reformation of the rural schools, and that they themselves are the greatest hindrance to the needed changes."—*The Pathfinder.*

An Arithmetic Device

So many untidy arithmetic papers have been passed in that I began to despair of ever arousing the pride of the class. Every method failed, until I hit upon the following, which has proved to be wonderfully effective:

First I made an attractive cover for each member of the class, in which to put all tidy, well-written papers that might be passed in. Nothing but the best would be accepted, and for a few days it seemed as if that best would never make its appearance. But the papers began to improve, and by and by they began to find their way into the covers. At the end of every week the best paper was selected from each cover and the others removed. During the following week each one tried to pass in papers surpassing the best of the preceding week, and the result was all I could have wished.—*Selected.*