

There seems to be some difference of opinion as to what nature study is. With some it is a method of teaching—the natural method. With this opinion I must disagree. I do admit there is such a thing as natural or common sense method in teaching, *e.g.*, if we wish to teach carpeting in arithmetic, the natural method is to have the pupils go through the actual operation of carpeting. There is no question as to the value of this method, but it is not nature study. How can it be, shut off as we are from the very face of nature? With others nature study is confounded with elementary science. 'Tis true that in actual practice it is sometimes difficult to distinguish the two. At least, as teachers, we are so anxious to impart knowledge that I'm afraid we do not always avoid the domain of science. Nature study, however, is not science; it is the study of the objects and conditions everywhere environing us, that we may the better see and comprehend the common things of life; above all, that we may acquire a sympathy with, and a love for nature. In my opinion, it matters little what name we give it, whether nature study or elementary science, or whether we give it a name at all, so long as we endeavor to acquire this sympathy with nature; and, as Bailey says, "To see what we look at and to draw proper conclusions from what we see."

As to its educational values, I need offer no special plea. On this topic you have already listened to much discussion. It rests upon the same psychological basis as domestic science and manual training, and is advocated by most of the distinguished educators of the present day. We are all well aware of the "knowledge never learned of schools," which a child acquires during his early years; the idea is to continue, as far as possible, the same natural means of educating. It is claimed our school work has been too bookish; we talk about sense perceptions, sense training, objective teaching, and concrete notions; and yet, we cling to our books as closely as ever. If there is anything in the educational principles, from percept to concept, from particular to general, surely it is in nature study, with its objective realities, that they receive their truest and widest application. The subject, therefore, rests upon rational and sound pedagogical principles. Moreover, few other subjects on our curriculum give anything like the same training in observation, nor does it stop here; the child must interpret what he sees, thus his reasoning and judgment are exercised and trained; his mental activities are made the most of and are directed along useful lines. The child is interested in the common things about him; if we are to succeed as teachers we must take advantage of this interest and