

## NATURE STUDY—No. VI.

## NATURE STUDY WITH ADVANCED CLASSES—AN EXPERIMENT.

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Bailey has said : "When the teacher thinks chiefly of his subject, he teaches a science ; when he thinks chiefly of his pupil, he is probably teaching Nature Study." This sentence puts in a nut-shell the proper *attitude* of the teacher of Nature-Study, but it should also be the attitude of every teacher who claims to *educate*, no matter whether he is dealing with pupils in the public schools, or with students in the colleges and universities. It must be admitted that the framers of the courses, and the teachers as well, in most of our colleges, lay too great stress on the subject-matter, and leave out, to a large degree, the student. Of all colleges, an agricultural college should be the best school for the study of Nature,—and for Nature-Study as well, if there is a real distinction ; for from the outset the attention of the student is directed towards the soil, the plant, and the animal ; yet, it must be confessed that the method of instruction in some of these colleges is still 'largely a reflection of mediæval practices and ideals.'

For some time past the writer felt that the studies of the regular session dealt too much with laboratory collections and with books, and too little with out-of-door subjects. He felt also that the student should acquire the "habit of observing and seeing for himself and at his best, without books or help, in the presence of the facts and in the open air." It is true that the in-door method of investigation is an adaptation to meet unfavorable conditions. The regular session of the Ontario Agricultural College does not begin until the middle of September ; winter sets in about the first week of November ; and the session closes on the 15th of April. There is therefore little opportunity for thorough out-of-door studies during the regular session.

To remedy this state of affairs, a two months' course in Nature-Study was given at the College, for the first time this year to the students of the Third Year. This course began on the 20th of April, and continued until the 15th of June.

As the students were already familiar with the elementary facts of botany, physics, entomology, and zoology, the method of in-