

But Nature Study does not stop at careful observation and the formation of distinct and true mental pictures. It leads to a knowledge not only of the structure but of the functions of living things. It continually puts the questions, why? and wherefore? and thus educates or draws out that valuable art of deduction, without which our observations would be of little service—without which half the value of Nature Study would be lost. Of this feature, however, it is not our present intention to speak further, but rather to bring to the notice of the earnest and enthusiastic student the camera as an aid and adjunct to careful, accurate observation. The making of a photograph—and by the making I include the taking, the dark room work and the printing—serves to impress the image of what we have seen upon the mind and memory as nothing but making a drawing can—emphatically and accurately. The mere focussing on the ground glass of the tree, a clump of fern, the bird on her nest, serves to imprint the image on the memory more accurately, vividly and permanently than does the casual glance at the objects themselves. How much deeper and more lasting is the image after the finished print is made! The writer found in his college days that it well repaid to write out his lecture notes, even though the manuscript might never be reviewed—and in later days he finds the same principle still holds good with Nature Study and the camera.

All this, valuable as it is, however, does not comprise all the benefits to be derived from the aid of the camera. Though Nature Study is, as we have said, primarily for the out-of-doors, it frequently calls for subsequent work indoors to a more complete understanding of the objects of our study. In the photograph, carefully made, we have a record for this purpose. We cannot bring home with us the clump of towering trees, but in the image so accurately made by light we can again and again consider and compare their mode of growth, their contour and many other features. The same truth is still more obvious in geological studies. The rock cuttings showing the various strata, the escarpments and boulders can only be brought home for future study by the camera. And what shall we say of the fugitive clouds that, unconsciously to most of us, make the beauty of the landscape? We must secure the image ere the substance goes,