

Can you tell the age of a tree? Look at the end of a spruce log or round cordwood stick and you will see a number of rings. Each represents a year's growth. If you can count them you will find out the age of the tree and you will find many that were more than a century old. Can you tell the age of a twig or branch? Many persons in walking through the woods or along a pathway bordered by trees or shrubbery have the bad habit of breaking off twigs or branches, apparently for no purpose whatever. They do not think. If they did they would see that this will injure the tree and tend to spoil its shape. How much better it would be to treat the trees in our walks as companions and living beings from whom we might learn much if we would only ask them about themselves. Pulling down gently a branch or small stem, and beginning at the growing end look carefully along the bark until you find certain rings; further down another set, and so on. The space between each circle will show a season's growth, and may tell you by its length and vigour whether the season was a good growing one or not.

A branch of a red maple growing near my home tells me its life-history in a very entertaining way. It is fifteen years of age. It grew out of the parent trunk, on the north side, where it was shaded by a dense growth of neighboring trees. On the south side there was an open field and uninterrupted sunshine. "That's the place for me," the youngster-branch seems to have thought when he was three years old, for he turned squarely round and made for the open. The rings show that his growth was feeble during the first few years after turning toward the light; then the lengthened spaces began to show more vigorous growth, and every summer the branch is expanding in the grateful sunshine.

### Geography Made Interesting.

A. B. MacKENZIE, SYDNEY MINES.

It was the afternoon of a beautiful day in June. Miss B., the teacher at Malagash Point, expected a visitor, a former teacher of whom she was very fond. She was anxious to have her pupils acquit themselves creditably, but a spirit of unrest seemed to have taken possession of them, and she scarcely knew what to do. She almost dreaded the appearance of her friend. Recess arrived, and she went out for a breath of fresh air. She noticed the children all eagerly watching a vessel being towed out of the bay. It was a three-masted schooner,

and had been built in Tatamagouche. "I shall make this the basis of a talk on geography," thought she.

After recess her visitor arrived. When the school had been called to order, Miss B. asked her pupils how many had seen the vessel go out of the harbor. A score of hands went up. Then followed a series of questions: Where was she built? of what? by whom? her name, etc. Some of the boys knew all about her; they had seen her launched. One was asked to point out Tatamagouche on the map, also the water into which she sailed as she left the bay.

Does any one know which way she sailed when she entered the Northumberland Strait? If she went west, what places might she probably touch? Wallace and Pugwash were mentioned and pointed out. What might she carry from those places? From Wallace she might carry stone; from Pugwash, brick or deal. Then where would she be likely to take this cargo? Several places were mentioned and pointed out, viz., Charlottetown, Summerside, Sydney, and others. Then what might she carry from these places? From Charlottetown she might carry farm produce; from Sydney, coal. Where might she go with her cargo? Various towns were mentioned, and, as before, all were pointed out, and also the waters through which she passed.

To sum up. Here are some of the things the pupils learned incidentally from this lesson: That ship-building was an important industry; they learned a number of the principal sea-ports of the province; they learned about the advantage of a town having a good harbor; about the various exports of their own province, and something about the principal industries of the different sections. From one town the vessel carried coal, then mining was an important industry in that locality; from another port she carried deal, therefore lumbering was carried on in that district; and so on. The children, as well as the visitor, enjoyed the lesson and were deeply interested. The half hour passed all too quickly.

### The First Robin.

The sweetest sound our whole year round:  
'Tis the first robin of spring!  
The song of the full orchard choir  
Is not so fine a thing.

—Edmund Clarence Stedman.