

and work for the achievement of his purpose, and he is willing to take considerable pains in gaining skill which will enable him to attain his end quickly and effectively.

With such an attitude the child naturally finds the laboratory work of the High School distasteful, but he takes to certain forms of Nature Study as instinctively as the duck to the water. The life-history of birds, trees and insects, the adaptation of each to its environment, the relation of each to his own life, the care of animals and plants—these and similar subjects, if presented in the right way possess an irresistible charm to him.

These characteristics of child-nature furnish a key to the material and the method of study which should be selected during those early years.

It may be noted in this connection that such study may be quite as scientific as laboratory work. If we accept the dynamic definition of Science as that which furnishes insight to interpret a new situation, we must admit that the child who intelligently and perseveringly studies the life history of a bird or plant and acquires skill in the control of the life process, is proceeding scientifically even though he never perform a laboratory experiment. Further, there is reason to believe that if the child omits such study during childhood when the impulse is at its height he will never again be able to atone for his neglect.

As the attitude, during this entire period constantly progresses toward the more thoughtful attitude of youth there should similarly be a constantly increasing emphasis upon the conventional side and particularly upon the development of skill. The need for such experimental investigation will be realized most readily by the child when there is a selection of material which lies very close to his own life interest, for example, the study of the effects of various kinds of food upon pet animals, of heat, light and moisture upon plants, or the humane extinction of injurious insects. These subjects may be treated from the functional standpoint without any tendency to commercialism. Such studies enlist the interest of the parent in the work of the school. They prevent and cure habits of vandalism and cruelty, and develop in the child a spirit of co-operation and helpfulness, which is the highest aim of education.