

# THE OTTAWA NATURALIST

---

VOL. XXII. OTTAWA, NOVEMBER, 1908

No. 8.

---

## THE IMPORTANCE OF NATURE STUDY, WITH SOME SUGGESTIONS AS TO METHODS.\*

By J. F. POWER, M.A., TORONTO.

Since most of us were pupils at the primary schools, marked changes have taken place in the subjects taught therein. This need create no surprise. Strange it would be if reforms in education did not keep pace with the revolutionary changes going on in the world around us. To-day, as never before, the plea is being made for a course of study which will better adapt the child to his environment. Hence, subjects like manual training and domestic science are receiving a place on the curriculum. Nor need there be any conflict between those subjects and what have been always considered the essentials of a proper school course; rather will they supplement the latter. I think we are all pretty well agreed as to their educational importance; if so, it is our duty to do all we can to encourage their existence. This we can do by speaking well of them and by giving them our sympathy and hearty support.

There is another subject, nature study, which has been attracting a good deal of attention. It is now about four years since it was formally introduced on the curriculum; and the question may well be asked, what has been accomplished? I venture to say a good deal has been done. We may not fully realize this; we may not be always conscious that we are dealing with nature study when, perhaps, we are doing some of our best work in the subject. We have heard a good deal about it and have listened to considerable discussion upon it; and I think we are, perhaps unconsciously, more interested in the things around us than ever before. I fully believe also that our pupils have imbibed some of this enthusiasm, and that they are beginning to see pleasures in the common things of every day life.

---

\*Read before Ottawa Teachers' Association, May 8th, 1908.