

As a matter of fact, it is only by putting before the children's eyes the phenomena to be observed, and that they can be taught to observe, and that the principles which underlie the science of modern agriculture can be instilled into their minds. It should be remembered that this can be done for the rural agriculturalist only at school, where it will never be necessary to teach him the details which his father knows better than the teacher, and which he will be certain to learn from his own practical experience.

The work of the elementary school should be confined to preparing the child for an intelligent apprenticeship to the trade by which he is to live, to giving him a taste for his future occupation ; with this in view, the teacher should never forget that the best way to make a workman like his work is to make him understand it.

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The following extracts are made from Pamphlet No. 5, "Agricultural Education in Ireland," by John C. Medd, issued by the Agricultural Educational Committee, 10 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, London, S. W.

Agriculture is a compulsory subject for boys of the fourth and upper classes in all rural schools, and it is optional for girls; even in town schools the subject may be taught to boys and girls. In 1898 the subject was taught to 85,000 pupils. Some 82 schools have school gardens attached to them, and here very useful practical work is done, although the method of instruction might be considerably improved. Elsewhere the subject is taught, as a rule, entirely from a text book, by Prof. Carroll, entitled, "Introduction to Practical Farming," and is unaccompanied by any practical illustrations, a knowledge of the text book alone being required by the rules of the commissioners. The evidence produced before the Royal Commission on Manual and Practical Instruction in Primary Schools (1898) went to show that the subject so taught was of little practical value. The children do not obtain any real grasp of the subject, as no efforts need be made to give them a practical acquaintance with the objects and processes described in the lessons. In the Final Report of the Commission (p. 40) it was recommended that the course in agriculture should be altered; that it should consist of instruction in the elements of the natural and physical sciences that have a direct bearing on agriculture, and that this instruction should be given with the aid of experiments of a simple character, performed as far as possible by the pupils themselves. In the opinion of the Commissioners such instruction would afford a good disciplinary training for all children, even for those who are not to be subsequently engaged in the practice of agriculture, while it would enable those who are to be so engaged at a later stage to make intelligent use of scientific treatises on the subject. Professor Carroll, Superintendent of the Agricultural Department of the National Board of Education, in his report for 1899, makes some very valuable observations, which are given below, upon the importance of this type of instruction.