

thought, by which alone plants can be properly examined, must necessarily be inculcated, and will prove invaluable in any vocation of life. Nor is it essential that the study (to be of use as a training for the mind) should be carried to any great length—we cannot all hope to be Darwins, Grays or Macouns—the elements of the science alone are sufficient as a means for the practice of this training to habits of methodical thought.

The taking of notes in a neat and systematic way, by which alone the results of examinations and discoveries can be recorded in a manner ready for reference, begets a concise style and an accurate use of exact words; while in the very collecting of material to form an herbarium, the faculty of observation is cultivated and developed, and the power to discriminate between species, thus to appreciate minute differences is obtained. Most important of all things to the botanist are these faculties of observation and comparison. Many persons have a natural acuteness in perceiving details of structure and in generalizing results, while others are very obtuse in such respects. Yet, in all, these powers can be cultivated and strengthened, and herein lies one of the great educational uses of botany, that it trains us to see and to think.

But in addition to the direct benefits to be gained by the study of botany, there are others of a more general nature, and man's great aim in life being the pursuit of happiness, I would place first the added pleasure it gives to life. To one not trained to an inquisitive appreciation of Dame Nature how comparatively few are the beauties she displays.

“A primrose by the river's brim
A yellow primrose is to him,
And it is nothing more.”

Very different is it when he has the slightest knowledge of botany. Then, in even the humblest of the vegetable creation, he can note the structure, take cognizance of the relationship borne by the several parts to each other, see the marvellous way in which each organ is adapted to serve a certain end, and in all admire and do homage to that All Wise Being at whose creative fiat all things first were made.

Last but by no means least of the advantages to be mentioned is, that the pursuit of the science, leading to exercise in the open air, is